Encounter

The General and the Terrorist

RAYMOND ARON
The Fifth Republic

GERMAINE TILLION
Testimony in Algiers

DAN JACOBSON — **After Notting Hill**

RICHARD H. ROVERE — **Last Days of McCarthy**

D. J. ENRIGHT — **Empire of the English Tongue**

STEPHEN SPENDER — **From a Diary**

The Sleepwalker

ARTHUR KOESTLER

DECEMBER 1958 **63** *MONTHLY 3s.*

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Workwatchers of the world arise!

MY OLD COUSIN Francis spent many years at sea and had, like most ancient mariners, a piercing eye. But when I knew him he was retired; and I am puzzled to this day about the optical tenor of his latter days. The fact is that from scanning horizons and peering through sextants he somehow degraduated to passionate work-watching. In New York they dub such characters 'sidewalk superintendents'; as a Londoner I'd call cousin Francis the prince of pavement gawkers.

The sound of the sledge as it topped the wedge was music to his ears, while for a steamroller his face lit up with the sort of fervour one normally sees only in the Stewards' at Henley or the Tavern at Lords. How the old man would have loved this super-mechanical age. When contractors actually erect observation platforms for pavement gawkers.

Building in his day was small beer, compared with the modern conception, carried out mostly by "small men" whose enterprise was limited by the length of their purses. Today the building trade deals in millions of pounds every year, and so of course deals not with purses but with banks. Moreover, a friend who holds a position of authority in Lloyds Bank tells me that not only builders but their workpeople, too, figure largely among his customers. In fact, as the building trade expands so also do the bank's services to everybody involved in it.

Happy thought – shall I see one day a new sign on the counter of my local branch "Lloyds Bank: Patrons Extraordinary to the Honourable Society of British Pavement Gawkers"? J.M.

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

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Encounter

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The framework of steel

Problem – how to organise a giant industry without stifling it

WE'VE tapped the power of the atom. We can send messages round the world in a flash. We stand on the threshold of space and with radio telescopes probe its ultimate depths.

And now we can see the answer to a challenge quite as formidable as these – and one which, in its undramatic way, affects our daily lives quite as much. You might sum it up like this: is it possible to make sure a giant industry is run in the national interest, *and at the same time give its native enterprise free play?*

Make no mistake. This *matters*. It could affect our whole standard of living. So it is a good thing for Britain that it *has* been proved possible in Steel – which sustains the fabric of all our other industries. The framework of the Steel Industry is such that there is a happy balance between Private Enterprise and Public Supervision.

STEEL'S SOLUTION

The Steel Industry is supervised by the Iron and Steel Board, with powers given it by Parliament. The Board is appointed by the Minister of Power – and he is responsible, through Parliament, to *you*. It is composed of a Chairman and two full-time Members, as well as iron and steel users, makers and trade unionists.

The Board controls steel prices. It sees that the Industry's plans for the future fit in with national plans. It has a say in all matters of major policy.

THE BIG BUT

But – a big But – this doesn't add up to rigid control from the centre. The man on the spot still runs his own show. His enterprise isn't fettered. He can still compete with other firms. He can still do his best to make and sell steel as efficiently and cheaply as ingenuity can manage. And he does.

There are more than 300 steel companies, scattered over Britain's green and smoky land. Some are huge concerns with over 20,000 workpeople. Others are tiny, with 50 men or less. Most are specialists, making sheet or plates, tubes or beams, stainless steel or special alloys.

The Board works out (with the Industry and the Government) what the country needs. Then it is up to the companies to provide it. *They* bear the financial risk. *They* furnish the technical skill.

TWO KEY WORDS

Of course there is co-operation as well as competition. The companies have their own organisation – the British Iron and Steel Federation. They co-operate in importing iron ore; in opening up new ore-fields and building ore carriers; in training and research; in anything that can be done better by working together.

So there are two key words to explain the framework of steel – *enterprise* and *supervision*. Both help to keep the Industry moving forward. It is a well-balanced system; and it works. Under it the Steel Industry is expanding faster than ever before.

THE BRITISH IRON AND STEEL FEDERATION

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Dan Jacobson

After Notting Hill

THE walls of the court were white, the chairs on which the judge and counsel sat were heavy affairs of green leather, with a gold crest emblazoned on each. The judge himself was bewigged and scarlet-gowned; he had a drawn, thin face, with large eyes and an aquiline nose; he spoke in a measured and careful way, as one might imagine a judge should, but the glances he gave around the court were quick and unpredictable. He looked at the accused, at the jury, then up at the public gallery, at counsel, at his notes—one never knew where he was going to look next; and one never knew why he looked in any particular direction when he did. He picked up the knife with which a boy had been stabbed and killed; he pointed it towards the jury, he used it as a marker for his place among the notes, he put it aside again. It was a vicious knife, with a sharp point and a blade about six inches long, it shone brightly in his hand.

And in the dock were two boys—the one who had actually done the stabbing, and another, his friend. When the latter was found not guilty by the jury his body gave a single convulsive shudder, and his head lolled forward: of all those I saw, he reacted most violently to what was said to him, and he was the one who was set free. A policeman touched his arm, and he was led away. Now the other boy stood alone in the dock.

He was, if I remember rightly, sixteen years and four months in age. He was wearing a dark blue suit: he was not tall for his age, but very heavily-built; he had a pale, ugly, putty-like, pig-like face, thrust forward at the mouth, going back over the low brow to the dark hair brushed above. He moved heavily; he seemed sunk beneath feeling or knowing, in a kind of protective stupor. According to witnesses, just before producing the knife with which he had stabbed the other boy he had shouted out, "You think I'm nobody?" and now he really seemed like nobody: even the pity one felt for him became involuntarily a part of the movement of one's soul to dissociate oneself from him, to have nothing to do with him. He was found guilty of manslaughter, and was sentenced to five years' imprisonment: when he was taken beneath the court his head moved up and down in time with the movement of his feet, in a plodding, animal weariness and heaviness.

But it was just by accident that I had come upon this case, with all its details of the argument in the lavatory, and the argument in the street outside, and the argument in the pub, and the fatal argument in the entrance to the dance-hall. No sooner had the boy left the dock than his place was taken by nine other youths, each of them charged on five separate counts of causing actual bodily harm to coloured people they had fallen on in the streets of Notting Hill—the very first series of incidents that led to what became known as the "Notting Hill Race Riots." The boy who had stood alone in the dock before the others came in had looked as though he might

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have done something low, unknowing, brutal. But these boys——!

"Guilty," each of them said at first, as the charges were read out; and then one of them said, "Guilty, sir," and by the time the clerk had finished his roll, they were all saying, "Guilty, sir," like people anxious to learn the correct social usages for the company they found themselves in. There they were, the nine of them, five in the front row and four in the back; and what one felt throughout the trial was a kind of embarrassment that the evidence and the depositions and the statements by prosecution and defence should have been about the youngsters before one. Embarrassment was stronger than pity, stronger than shame, stronger even than the sense of shock at what they had done. They were children—small, thin, thin-wristed, thin-necked: there were only two of them that one could imagine being able to attack anyone bigger than a schoolboy in a playground. They were all quietly dressed, though not all wore ties and one had on an American-style checked shirt; they had the pinched, pale faces of English city boys—faces on which the lips and eyes look vividly dark, everything else having no colour—and especially in that courtroom, where the light came straight down from above, through a flat and circular glass roof. Most of them were seventeen years old; the oldest was twenty. You could have seen them on a building lot, riding a delivery boy's bicycle, being mate to an electrician: you wouldn't have looked twice. There was nothing the least bit depraved, dissolute, dangerous about them. When they went below the court at an adjournment they looked through the glass for their relatives and friends in the galleries, and discreetly but cheerfully waggled their fingers at them, nodded their heads, smiled at the corners of their mouths. They weren't sunken nobodies; they were rather jaunty anybodies.

And that, really, was the most disturbing thing about them—the most frightening, disheartening, inexplicable. A couple of them, it was clear, were problems in their work and with their families: there was one, aged seventeen, who in his brief working career had already occupied no less than eighteen different positions; and there was another who had already had four larceny charges laid against him. But those were the only two with troubled records of any kind. For the rest, the detective-inspector in charge of the case had to confirm defence counsel statements that this boy, and the other, and the third, came from a good home, was regularly employed at such-and-such-a-place, that his employers were satisfied with him (many of the employers had said that they would gladly take the boys back into their service), and that he had been earning regular and quite substantial sums of money. The highest paid among them was earning an average wage of ten guineas a week; and they were all living at home. One of them already owned a motor car.

On a Saturday night about three weeks before, these boys had been drinking at a pub (with the name, ironically enough, of *The General Smuts*). They had then armed themselves, climbed into the car owned by the one of them, and had gone on what they described in their statements to the police as a "nigger-hunting expedition." (It was recorded that the owner of the car was the only one who had objected to the expedition—on the grounds "that there were too many of them to fit into the car.") The weapons with which they had armed themselves were produced in court: they included four or five wooden staves, each three or four feet long, a car starter-handle, a knife, an air pistol, the leg of a table, and several iron railings with spear-shaped ends—the kind of railing one sees around London's parks and squares.

Their plan of action was very simple. They cruised around the streets of Notting Hill, and when they saw a solitary coloured man, all nine of them climbed out of the car and started beating him about the head and the body with the iron railings and staves and other weapons; when their victim fell unconscious they left him bleeding on the pavement, climbed back into the car, and went on with their search. In this way they occupied

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themselves between the hours of about midnight and five in the morning. They never attacked groups, armed though they were: the biggest number they ever took on, the nine of them, was *two*, and that was on only one occasion. Of the people they attacked, three had had to be in hospital for a couple of weeks; through some lucky fluke none of the victims actually had his skull broken, though those that didn't manage to run away suffered severe scalp lacerations.

The depositions made by the accused were not read out in full to the court; but extracts were. Of the nine, only one in making his statement to the police seemed to have expressed any regret for what he had done; the others offered in mitigation merely such phrases as, "Anyway, I hate niggers," or, "I whacked that nigger only a couple of times." Their depositions sounded almost as brutal as their acts had been.

WHEN defence counsel had made their pleas for their clients, the clerk called upon the accused to stand, and the judge began reading—very carefully—the speech which he had prepared. Before the judge was half-way through the speech one of the mothers at the back of the court had started to cry; when he passed sentence (and the length of the sentence was already headline-matter when I came out of the building) there was an indrawing of breath from every part of the court; a blonde woman struggled to her feet with a blind, wading movement of her arms, and was taken out in tears; then, as the sentences on the rest were read out, other women broke down. But the scenes weren't "dramatic," as the papers were so quick to declare them; or if they were, they were dramatic in the confused and graceless way that most scenes really are, outside the newspapers. There was confusion on the benches where the relatives were sitting; there was confusion in the dock, where the prisoners turned to go, and then were halted because the proceedings weren't quite over yet. Then, suddenly, they had gone; and there was confusion outside the court, where the relatives gathered in little groups, none of them knowing what to do or where to go next. A very short man in a tight blue suit shook his finger at another and shouted, "Four years! My boy's life is ruined.... You won't come into my house again..." and an embarrassed boy in a black leather lumberjacket took him by the arm and began pulling him away—"Come on, Dad, it doesn't help to carry on... it's no use, please come on, Dad." Eventually the father, still gesticulating in

Manhunt

You all stand convicted on your own confessions of a series of extremely grave and brutal crimes. On the night of August 24th, you nine men formed yourselves into a gang and set out on a cruel and vicious manhunt. You armed yourselves with iron bars and other weapons and your quarry was any man, provided there were not more than two of them together, whose skin happened to be a different colour from your own. Your object was to instil stark terror and inflict as much pain and grievous injury as you could. During that night you savagely attacked five peaceful, law-abiding citizens without any shadow of an excuse. None of them had done you any harm; none of them had offered you the slightest provocation....

It was you men who started the whole of this violence in Notting Hill. You are a minute and insignificant section of the population who have brought shame on the district in which you live and have filled the whole nation with horror, indignation, and disgust.

Everyone, irrespective of the colour of their skins, is entitled to walk through our streets in peace, with their heads erect and free from fear. That is a right which these courts will always unfailingly uphold. As far as the law is concerned, you are entitled to think what you like, however foul your thoughts; to feel what you like, however brutal and debased your emotions; to say what you like, provided you do not infringe the rights of others or imperil the Queen's Peace.

But once you translate your dark thoughts and brutal feelings into savage acts such as these, the law will be swift to punish you, the guilty, and to protect your victims.

FROM THE DECISION BY
MR. JUSTICE SALMON

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his tight little suit, allowed himself to be led away; and the others too dispersed. And the courts went on with their business. The judge who had tried the nine youths was now busy with five exceedingly distinguished-looking company directors and financial journalists, up on a charge of conspiring to defraud the public.

By their actions these nine youths had given notice that Notting Hill would be a good place to come to if one was looking for trouble; and the week-end following their attacks saw trouble—as we all know—on a very much bigger scale than anything the nine youths by themselves had been able to accomplish. The name "Notting Hill" has been given to the riots, but the area in which disturbances of one kind or another took place—ranging from attacks on individual coloureds to the stoning of houses, attempts at arson, and street brawling on an extensive scale—is very wide indeed. It stretches from beyond the Edgware Road on the west to Shepherd's Bush on the east; and from the Bayswater Road on the south to somewhere north of Westbourne Park. It includes the highly respectable—the almost Kensingtonian—squares and crescents of Holland Park; and the slums just to the north of Paddington where terraces of tall-windowed houses seem to show, as they peel hideously, the remains of every single coat of paint put on them since they were built a hundred years ago. The district is one that declines abruptly and improves again, as abruptly; and though some of the streets are like pits, with the houses standing bleakly on the pavements, or set back from the pavements only by railed and sunken areas where milk bottles and rubbish-bins accumulate, its overall air is not one of unspeakable and destructive poverty. Most of it, rather, is just grindingly dispirited and ugly, with an ugliness that too much of London shares for one to be shocked especially by it. And there are the bright new council housing estates.

Only around Westbourne Park—where the road humps itself over a little bridge, and acres of railway lines lie below to the west, towards Paddington—could one be struck at all by the number of coloured people there are in the streets. Only those few streets might remain in the mind as a place where the notion of a "problem" might, under ordinary circumstances, occur to one. And though one can hardly measure the size of a problem by the number of people involved in it, it is worth repeating that out of a total population in Great Britain of something approaching fifty million, it is estimated that there are only about 200,000 coloured people. And of these, almost half are Indians and Pakistanis who—though they too are the victims of prejudice—are certainly not nearly so much in the public eye as the West Indians, or the very many fewer West Africans. It is the latter two groups that everyone is busy with at the moment: they are the "niggers" whom the boys went "hunting"; they are the people whom the mobs turned out so promptly on the next week-end to bait, injure, and humiliate.

I must confess that much of my first reaction to the news of the disturbances was a feeling of sheer irritation and weariness—irritation particularly because as a South African I couldn't help thinking immediately of what satisfaction and delight the news would give to the people one had opposed in South Africa; of the sanctimonious editorials that would be written and the self-satisfied speeches that would be made, on the lines of, "*Now* you won't be able to adopt superior moral attitudes to us; you see, you're even worse than we are . . ." etc., etc. And sure enough, that was the attitude of much of the South African press and many South African politicians; and at the time I felt I could hardly blame them for taking it. If the famously liberal and enlightened and law-abiding English failed to deal with *their* tiny colour-problem in terms other than those of violence and malevolence, what in heaven's name could one expect of a handful of Boers and their English-speaking fellow-whites scattered in isolation over the southern half of the African continent; what could one expect, for that matter, of the resentful and

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embittered southern whites in the United States? Indeed, if hundreds of the English came out into the streets with their stones and milk-bottles and switch-knives because of the number of coloureds one sees in London, the wonder seemed to be that in a country like South Africa there is so much —not so little—of the rule of law.

And for all the concern and generosity of spirit that was for the most part shown by the press, I found it impossible to be set at any kind of rest by the discussions of the events and their causes that were held so lengthily and with such repetitiveness in all the English newspapers and periodicals. By now we must all have read a hundred times about white fears about housing, white sexual jealousy, white resentment of the habits of those West Indians who sit on pavements, or play guitars loudly, or live off a pittance in order to be able to buy a motor car; just as we have read a hundred times that coloureds do *not* really jump the queues for council housing, that very few of them live off immoral earnings or the peddling of drugs, that most of them are employed in hard jobs for a small reward, are anxious to live respectably, and have been driven to come to Great Britain because there is no work and no food for them in the West Indies. All these things are true; by now they have all been said, many times.

And they remain inadequate. They are all true, I repeat; they must be said; but we mustn't think that we have a grasp of the full dimensions of the problem when we have read or said them. Housing, or local employment practices, or the provision of welfare services do not, either individually or collectively, "make up" the problem with which we are dealing now, which is, ultimately, a problem of feeling. To dodge that is something I do not believe we can afford to do: it is merely to try hopelessly to shove away from us what is in fact a part of our society —a deeper and more tenacious part than we are generally prepared to admit.

I don't want to dignify the meanness and vileness of racial prejudice by seeming to make of it something occult, pervasive, inescapable. But I do want to say that the nine boys who went into the streets of Notting Hill to stage their "nigger hunt"—those nine boys with (mostly) good records, good jobs, and good homes—were prompted to do what they did by something much more difficult to deal with directly than a housing shortage; even more difficult to deal with than the psychological troubles they might have had in common with the anonymous boy whose trial preceded theirs. Those nine boys were vicious and stupid, and what they did is unforgiveable; but in their very viciousness and stupidity they showed themselves to be the victims of a complex of attitudes and beliefs which seem to be in the very bone and marrow of what we call "our civilisation." The complex is paralleled in its depth and tenacity only by that very different one with which Christian societies endlessly struggle in their relations with Jews.

What, after all, have the relations of "White Civilisation" (to use the necessarily crude South African term) hitherto been to the Negroes it now finds walking about in its streets? Historically, the relations of the white man to the black have been overwhelmingly those of slave-driver to slave, missionary to heathen, governor to tribesman, master to servant, superior to inferior. The white man until very recently has had to go out to meet the black man; and in doing so, at his most self-consciously noble, the white saw himself as a bringer of his "civilisation," with its order and system, to "natives" whose lives would otherwise have been given over entirely (in the eyes of the white) to disorder, violence, and slovenliness. And at his least noble, of course, the white found in the powerlessness and poverty of black men nothing but an incitement to inflict as much degradation as he could upon them—the disorder which he imputed to "black" life being as much of a temptation to the white as it ever was a threat. And this historical process —in itself bedevilling enough to the relations of white with black to-day—happened to meet and respond precisely with a kind of moral symbolism that was already there, as it were, in the structure of the white mind.

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Certainly it was in his language, and higher or deeper than the language we cannot go: like the air, we move within it. "Black," it is perhaps necessary to remind ourselves, remains the colour of evil, of lies, of plague, of the murderer's heart, of the devil himself; and "white"—white is purity and cleanliness and holiness, white is the raiment of the angels.

Do these things matter. How can they not? Recently, the American Negro writer, Ralph Ellison, commenting on the white American's fascination with the "symbolism of blackness and whiteness," has remarked that the Negro, "caught up in the negative side of this basic dualism," has been "shackled" to almost everything the white folk mind would repress from consciousness.

Hooliganism

Walter Bagehot once said that the worst pain for Englishmen was the pain of a new idea. At least as painful is the explosion of an old myth. Such a myth is the illusion that English people are conspicuously kindly to strangers in their midst. In fact they are generally suspicious and sometimes resentful of "foreigners," including Jews and the Irish. But, as a rule, they have had two great saving graces. One is that they tend to be easy-going in their prejudices; they are often xenophobic in word but only seldom in deed. The other is that, generally, they are law-abiding; they do not press their prejudices with the knife or the boot. The appalling feature of the recent disorders first in Nottingham and then in the so-called Notting Hill district of London is that they have shown what can happen in this land of the free where these natural, national restraints are off.

THE ECONOMIST

There is no "colour problem" in this country. To discuss it endlessly is to discuss nothing *endlessly: it does not exist.*

What there is is a British *problem, and it is a grave one, a very grave one indeed. When a great and apparently prosperous country cannot peacefully absorb some 250,000 people (a mere 0.5 per cent of its total population), there must be something gravely wrong with that country.*

By these sudden disturbances what strange and monstrous manifestations have been churned up from the depths of our society! What hatred, bitterness, and spite is suddenly revealed, what anger and frustration, what boredom and what rootless, aimless hooliganism, what envy, perhaps (yes, envy: are not West Indians envied *if they look happy and well-dressed?).*

There was no "Jewish problem" in Germany. There was a German problem, however, as we and the world know to our cost.

By the same token, do not look at the coloured people for some explanation of our present discontents: do not peer at them, noting and listing all their faults and inadequacies, their tiresome habits and their crimes (alleged). These people are no more than the chance victims of our own social disorders.

Look rather at ourselves, look long and deep. You may be rather frightened by what you see.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Research into the genealogy of the clan Hooligan suggests that probably there never was a Mr. Hooligan. The question to be asked is rather, "Who was Hooley?" According to W. Ware (in Partridge's "Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English") the term "hooligan" is derived from the "Hooley Gang," a name given by the police in Islington to a gang of young roughs led by one Hooley. But there are other theories. In the middle of the 1890's (which seems to be when the word came into being) a lively Irish family called the Houlihans was resident in the Borough (London), and it is possible that their night life became a byword for roistering in general.

A further (hitherto unpropounded theory) is that the word stems from the Hindustani "hoolee" and was incorporated into our language, like so many other Indian words, by soldiers in the Indian Army. An 1889 edition of the Century Dictionary defines "hoolee" as a festival in honour of Krishna: "the occasion is one of boisterous merry-making and fooling. Friends and strangers are pelted with red powder, or drenched with yellow liquid from squirts. There is continual singing and dancing, more or less obscene, and tricks are played closely resembling the April-fooling of the English."

THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

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"The physical hardships and indignities of slavery," Ellison goes on to say, "were benign compared to this continuing debasement of our image. Because these things are bound up with their notions of chaos, it is impossible for many whites to consider questions of sex, women, economic opportunity, the national identity . . . without summoning malignant images of black men into consciousness." Ellison is, of course, writing of the particular conditions of the United States; but what he has to say has its immediate relevance to the confrontation anywhere—whether in Johannesburg or Notting Hill—of white with black.

This may seem to have taken us a long way from the nine youths in the dock; I don't believe that it has. I believe that they—and a great many of those who followed their example—felt themselves in some special and terrible way *permitted* to attack the coloureds who were their victims; and that in their attitudes to what they did (and in the attitudes of their parents to them and the court) there was an element of something approaching self-righteousness, which would have been absent had their victims belonged to some other group, or merely to another gang. These young men were trapped within a history; being both weak and violent, they could not escape from it—no more than in the event they could escape from the consequences of those religious beliefs of ours which declare every man to be equal before God, or those secular ambitions of ours which struggle to see every man as an equal before the law.

And surely it was in response to this unspoken yet suspected notion of "permittedness" that such exceptionally heavy sentences were passed, and were so heartily approved of by practically every section of British public opinion.

The balance of aggression and restraint is never struck, but societies, like people, must live as well as they can by trying for it.

THERE is one other "underground" aspect of the public reaction to the riots which has not, so far as I know, been referred to anywhere. It is an aspect that it is curiously difficult to write about—for two paradoxical reasons: on the one hand it may appear flippant and tasteless to mention it at all, and on the other hand the issues it raises are far too large and important to be dealt with in the context of the riots themselves. What I am referring to here is the fact that on the part of a great many articulate and liberal-minded people the major response to the riots was one of a studied and deliberate indifference.

I was prepared to ascribe my own reaction of "weariness" to my being a South African; but I was surprised to find that so very many other people who weren't South Africans seemed to be equally weary. This is something one would never guess from reading the newspapers; but unless the people I happen to have met in the last couple of months have been untypical to an inexplicable degree, this is the truth of their reaction. People didn't want to read about the riots; they didn't want to hear about the riots; they wanted to have as little as they possibly could to do with the riots—even in the way of speculation and conversation, and, least of all, in any way that might involve their emotions directly. Time after time I encountered this reaction among people whom one ordinarily would have expected to have been concerned with public events and affairs of the day. Often people seemed ashamed of their indifference, and apologised for it, but by and large they were true to it nevertheless.

The truth is that the English liberals are bored, bored, bored—bored with anger, bored with indignation, bored with compassion; and they didn't want to think about the Notting Hill riots precisely because these were the emotions that the events threatened to rouse. Notting Hill showed up once again how thoroughly bored the English liberals are with their own liberalism. (I am, of course, using the word as it is used in the United States and South Africa, in a sense that has nothing to do with party politics.)

And—setting aside all the other reasons there are for a sense of sheer exhaustion with public affairs—how can the liberals in England *not* be bored when their words have had such a devastating triumph? We are all

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liberals and democrats nowadays: when we speak, at any rate, no matter what we may feel—and not only in England. What liberal can take exception to the words in which the well-known liberals of the Kremlin present their pleas, dicta, ultimata? Is there a South American dictator who does not announce his intentions in terms of free speech, universal suffrage, equality before the law, and a minimum standard of living? Or a Middle Eastern potentate? The South African Nationalists will roar you democracy as gently as sucking doves—let alone our Socialists and Tories, or our Generals of Washington and Paris. Even the out-and-out fascists—the Mosleyites and the League of Empire Loyalists and suchlike—have taken to speaking in the accents of concern, enlightenment, and consideration. *Keep Britain White* they scrawl on brick walls; but in their literature they will fervently assure you that they "feel sorry" for the West Indians; that they think it shocking that West Indians should be discriminated against in housing or employment or socially; and that that is one of the main reasons why they implore the government to keep them out of the country. And if—alongside these generous and high-minded avowals—they print details of the number of coloureds charged with sexual offences, they will be quick to point out that they feel it is their duty to keep the public informed—just as they are quick to claim that they are doing no more than exercise the democratic rights they respect so much when they move into a troubled area like Notting Hill with their platforms, loudspeakers, and Union Jacks.

And so it goes. The liberal hears his own words, distorted and magnified, coming from the lips of people he distrusts and despises. And he conceives a disgust for his own words. He never hears any words but his own; and yet when he looks around he sees that under the words of fairness, kindness, and tolerance, there breed unchecked all the old rancours and hatreds and meannesses; all the old lusts for violence. He turns away, stops his ears altogether, talks about something else.

I happen to believe that there is an element of health in this turning away; that "apathy" is a political weapon that the authoritarian bullies of all kinds are finding it hard to turn to their own purposes; that fatigue and indifference in a time like the present can be positively restorative. But the one thing we cannot afford to be indifferent about is our sense of fact: we must hang on to what we know, even when it cuts our own hands. Retaining our sense of fact, we may yet find our words regaining their meanings.

MANY well-intentioned people have said, "At least these disturbances have made everybody wake up, and that's a good thing; no one can say now that the problem doesn't exist." I think that this is a mistake: there is nothing "good"—even by way of warning—about what has happened. Peace breeds peace; but violence breeds violence and anger breeds anger; and to know that a man is hated—to read in the papers, see on the streets, hear on the buses that a man is hated—makes others hate him more than before, not less so. There is a fatal and ugly logic about the way these things move; and so far from Notting Hill and Nottingham having effected a "release" of a charge of tension, I am convinced that they have merely made more severe what tensions there were before.

Does this mean we may expect more outbreaks of the kind that have recently taken place? But the British (despite the hopes of some South African politicians) *are* tolerant and law-abiding and gentle, and the forces making for peace are immeasurably stronger than those making for repeated disorder of a large-scale kind. What has happened may very well mean more insults and gibes flung at individual West Indians, more isolated incidents of violence, more landladies refusing to let accommodation to coloured people. The problem is a difficult and bitter one; and it is going to be with us for a long time; a true and undiscouraged acknowledgment of its toughness is a first and necessary part of dealing with it.

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Raymond Aron

The Fifth Republic

Letter from Paris

IT WAS *Le Monde* which suggested, early this year (in an editorial more striking than surprising), that it was no longer a question of *whether* General de Gaulle returned to power but *when*. Some readers, apparently, had been tempted to put it the other way round. If General de Gaulle was to return to power at all, clearly it had to be soon: the national crisis created by the war in Algeria and the composition of the Assembly offered him a unique opportunity. Once peace was re-established in Algeria, France would no longer be faced with problems beyond the capacity of the régime to solve. But the régime could not solve the problem of Algeria. The resort to de Gaulle was probable, although the Gaullist *Rassemblement* faction was no less discredited than the other parties, and there was almost no visible sign either of revolt against the institutions of the Republic or of enthusiasm for the Liberator.

The General had voluntarily relinquished power at the beginning of 1946, not in order to say goodbye to politics but in the conviction that the parliamentarians would, sooner or later, recall him. History made him wait twelve years before his prophecies were fulfilled.

He had made one tactical error after another. When the first draft Constitution was submitted to the country, he remained silent. He took a stand against the second draft at a time when the M.R.P. was already committed. Once the Constitution had been approved, he tried to obtain its reform by creating a "revisionist" party, whose programme was centred on the theme of constitutional amendment. After some striking initial electoral successes, the General's *Rassemblement* presented itself alone at the 1951 elections against the associated parties. With 20 per cent of the votes in the country and 130 deputies in the Palais-Bourbon, the *Rassemblement* could exert some influence, but it could not force the *système* to capitulate. If General de Gaulle had himself stood for parliament, if he had himself undertaken the leadership of his R.P.F. group, it might have kept its coherence and dominated the legislature. This would have meant his agreeing to "play the parliamentary game," his becoming a party leader—and abandoning the rôle of national hero. He decided against it. The events of 1958 proved him right. Yet, at the same time, they proved him wrong to have constituted the R.P.F. for a descent into the electoral arena. No one can be the head of a political group and still remain above the battle; the failure of the Gaullist R.P.F. was implicit in this fundamental contradiction.

There was also a contradiction between the powers that a parliamentary democracy can give to a single man and the power to which General de Gaulle aspired—power in Maurras's sense, *absolu et limité*, power to say *"oui"* or *"non,"* to settle disputes, to take the decisions which control the fate of the nation. This monarchical authority is, to be sure, incompatible neither with the constitutional functioning of the State, nor with democratic legitimacy, nor with the free expression of interests and opinions. In a sense it could be said that Leon Blum himself, when he suggested that the Prime Minister should be a sort of *monarque temporaire*, was thinking along these lines. The difference—which is considerable—is that Leon Blum ascribed this monarchical rôle to the President of the Council of Ministers; General de Gaulle would reserve it for the President of the Republic. In the one case, the "temporary monarch" is the leader of a party or a coalition of parties, as in Great Britain; in the other, he is situated above parties.

In a parliamentary democracy, a "temporary monarch" who does not emerge from the parties is normally impossible. There must be a national

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catastrophe (or at least a feeling of catastrophe) before the parties and the Assembly will abdicate in favour of one man. This was the case in May–June 1958. Four months later, the Constitution proposed to the people of France was ratified by 80 per cent of the metropolitan electorate. General de Gaulle obtained a triumphant confirmation of the power he had deemed necessary for the country's salvation. He was at once a *dictateur* (of the kind to whom the Roman Republic was wont, on occasion, to entrust its fate) and a *législateur* (in the Greek sense of the word). The Constitution of the Fifth Republic is the *œuvre* of Charles de Gaulle, *législateur*. Finding a way out of the Algerian dilemma will be the task of Charles de Gaulle, *dictateur*.

ONLY those observers who are devoid of a sense of history will have been surprised by the decisive *"oui"* of 80 per cent of the French people. This is not to say that I myself foresaw such a large percentage, any more than did the *préfets*, the ministers, or the head of the Government himself. But after the event, the results seem to me to be intelligible both in the light of the existing situation and the French political temperament.

The present state of France shows all the features by which one recognises "a Bonapartist situation." The three main factors are: an atmosphere of national crisis, the discrediting of parliament and parliamentarians, and the popularity of one man. The national crisis can be created by social conflicts (as it was a century ago after the revolution of 1848), by military defeat (as was the case in 1940), or by "the loss of the Empire" as in 1958. The discrediting of parliament at the time of Louis-Napoleon was the result of the measures taken by the Assembly against the press and against universal suffrage; to-day it arises from ministerial instability and from the spectacle, either odious or ridiculous, presented by the *système*. As for the man around whom popular feeling crystallises, he is chosen by circumstances as much as by his own genius. Louis-Napoléon had made himself ridiculous by his previous escapades at Boulogne and Strasbourg, but his name sufficed to assure him the support of "the party of order," mostly monarchist, and of the peasants, who were loyal to the heir of the first Emperor. In the summer of 1940, Marshal Pétain would probably have obtained a vast majority of popular votes. In June 1958, General de Gaulle had no rivals for the rôle of legal saviour.

Perhaps the Algiers conspirators had in mind Jacques Soustelle or Georges Bidault, a "Government of Public Safety" rather than the old leader of Free France for whom the liberals of *l'Express* and M. Habib Bourguiba secretly longed. But Soustelle and Bidault were condemned to choose between a parliamentary alliance, which could only have achieved a majority with the threat of parachutists, and a *coup d'etat*, which risked setting the country aflame. Neither could be the charismatic leader acclaimed both by the Left and by the Right, by the *"ultras"* and by the liberals, by the French of Algeria and even by the Moslems.

The beneficiary of the Bonapartist situation, whether he is called Louis-Napoléon, Boulanger, Pétain, or de Gaulle, whether he is an adventurer, a waverer, an octogenarian, or indeed a great man, must have one peculiar virtue: the ability to transcend the country's political divisions, to be at once of the Right and of the Left, to unite the France of the *ancien régime* with the France of 1789. A "Bonaparte" is, and wants to be, essentially a Monarch born of the Revolution. As against the bourgeois-monarchist Assembly which had deprived millions of Frenchmen of the right to vote, Louis-Napoléon had embodied the idea of a democracy "whose nature is to be personified in one man." General Boulanger had at first been the protégé of Georges Clemenceau and the Radicals; Marshal Pétain had been called by Léon Blum "the most humane of our great military commanders." Moreover, whether General or Marshal, the military leader belongs neither to the bourgeoisie nor to the proletariat but to the whole nation at war.

GENERAL DE GAULLE, by origin and intellectual training, is a man of the Right. But since 1940 he has never ceased to appeal to the Republic as his authority, and he is evidently convinced—whatever his secret preferences may be—that, in our century, universal suffrage alone confers legitimacy on rulers, that free elections demand a multiplicity of parties, and constitutional government requires an Assembly which both legislates and controls the Ministers. "The providential man in whose hands the destinies of the country are placed" (to quote a phrase of Louis-Napoléon dating from 1847), far from dreaming of personal power, cherishes the ambition to give France durable institutions at long last.

It is, of course, not the first time that Frenchmen have yielded to the temptation to hand over to one man the responsibilities which they can no longer assume themselves and which their deputies seem unable to bear. In their heart of hearts, the deputies of July 1940 were not loath to grant full powers to Marshal Pétain, just as, in June 1958, they resigned themselves to granting them to General de Gaulle. The threat of "Weygand's divisions" eighteen years ago, and the threat of the parachutists five months ago,

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was in each case an alibi rather than a decisive factor. Whatever one's opinion of the Third or the Fourth Republic, it must be admitted that the former could not function under the Occupation and the latter could neither conduct nor end the Algerian war.

The resort to a "Roman dictator," the desire in a period of crisis to obey an authority embodied in a single man, is not in itself a pathological phenomenon. Clemenceau in 1917, Poincaré in 1926, Churchill in 1940, were hailed as leaders although they did not have to destroy the parliamentary framework. The French case presents two peculiarities. The memory of Napoléon in the last century presented a choice not between two but between three régimes: to the alternatives of monarchy and republic was added the "revolutionary monarchy" or the "republican empire," symbolised by the two phrases inscribed on our coins: *République française, Napoléon Empereur*. And even apart from avowed Bonapartism, all those whose vocation (or destiny) it is to be the charismatic leader have always made a new constitution their aim. Marshal Pétain, had circumstances allowed, would have drawn one up; it might not have been very different from the one which the country has just ratified. General de Gaulle has won the approval of 80 per cent of the French people for a constitutional document which conforms to his own well-known preferences.

COMMENTATORS have sought to analyse the extent to which the French people's vote represented hostility to the Fourth Republic, or confidence in General de Gaulle, or hope for the future. Can a single referendum answer such questions?

Clearly, the politicians who took a stand in favour of *"non"* won few votes: neither M. Daladier at Avignon nor M. Mendès-France at Louviers carried with them the mass of voters who usually follow them. The criticisms or the doubts of the intellectual classes, the manifestos of the associations of school-teachers and university professors, had no influence on the average citizen. The nation's political cadres, for the moment at least, have lost the confidence of the electors.

It will be objected that the referendum was "faked" in the sense that it was both a plebiscite and a referendum, that it put different questions in Dakar and in Paris, and that in Paris it put a multiplicity of questions to which one had to reply with a single word. It is true that the vote was for or against General de Gaulle rather than for or against the Constitution, for or against the *Communauté*. But the reasons for a hostile vote could have been increased by the diversity of questions: the man who approved the strengthening of the executive might have been offended by the permanent right of secession accorded to the African territories. In point of fact, each man found in the general conspectus that was offered to him elements which encouraged him to say *"oui."*

Over and above the *"non"* to the Fourth Republic and the *"oui"* to General de Gaulle, there was an irresistible *"oui"* to reality. Short of accepting a Popular Front Government, a majority of *"non"* would have led to an inextricable crisis. Not that a military *coup d'état* or a landing of parachutists was really to be feared, but a non-Gaullist Government not allied to the Communists was strictly inconceivable. M. Mendès-France took General de Gaulle to task for not having put an end to the Algerian war in three months; but the Government of the Fourth Republic had failed to put an end to it in three years. Even the advocates of an agreement with the F.L.N. had good motives for preferring General de Gaulle to Mendès-France; he offered more hope of a negotiated peace. Perhaps the chance with him was small; with M. Mendès-France it was non-existent.

Plus Ça Change

The Assembly has for some time been in session, busily arranging the manner of its own demise, or rather of its resurrection. The new electoral law has been exhaustively discussed, and it would seem that there is nothing left but to put it manfully into practice. When this has been peaceably and regularly done, and a new Assembly is lawfully installed, the largest step yet will have been taken toward making the Republic seem a permanently reasonable and comfortable state of things. . . .

DECEMBER 11, 1875

"Persuaded as we are," says M. Georges Lachaud (on behalf of the Empire), "that a dictatorship alone, by disembarrassing the French people of its grave cares, can restore to it its lightness and its grace, we await with impatience the hour in which France will transfer to the shoulders of a master the burden that renders her thoughtful. Let our future master bring the 'imperial corruption' into honour again! And if ever his detractors accuse him of degrading the people, and bring forward to outrage him the old Roman device, panem et circenses, *on that day the chief of the state may say with pride that he is really a great sovereign!"*

MARCH 4 ,1876

HENRY JAMES, PARISIAN SKETCHES (LETTERS TO THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE, 1875-76), *Hart-Davis.*

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A *"non"* could have only three meanings, some tortuous, some remote: taking up a position in preparation for what was to come after the Fifth Republic, reducing the inevitable and foreseeable Gaullist majority, or following the dictates of one's conscience with no thoughts of consequences. A *"non"* for the day-after-to-morrow is the speciality of professional politicians; a *"non"* with an eye to cutting percentages is something strange to the average citizen; a *"non"* based on what Max Weber called the *Gesinnungsethik* could hardly appeal to masses who wanted hope, not despair.

Clearly the *"oui"* vote was an expression of hope. The best proof of this is the desertion of a fraction (at least a quarter, probably more) of the electors who voted for the Communist Party in January 1956. One had always known that the 5½ million Communist voters were not all committed to the Stalin (or Khrushchev) view of the world. Whatever their motives for voting as they did—a sense of injustice, a revolt against reality, disgust with the nation's decline, a tradition of hostility to the State—the economic progress of recent years had not altered their electoral conduct. The accession to power of General de Gaulle shattered their opposition. The charismatic leader has an ascendancy over the working masses that the parliamentarian can never have. The appeal to patriotic sentiment, the hope of collective greatness, is what can bring the "separatists," at least temporarily, back into the fold.

IT IS difficult to-day to draw up an honest and objective balance-sheet for the Fourth Republic. The unanimous feeling against the recent régime recalls that of 1940 against the Third. This severity, which is not without injustice, at least reflects a healthy sentiment: the French people had enough of their rôle as the world's political laughing-stock. Whatever the consequences of this chronic governmental instability (even if they were less serious than is generally thought), the frequency of the ministerial crises discredited the régime both in the eyes of the French and of the outside world. A nation, in the long run, cannot obey those whom it despises.

This being said, a good many Frenchmen (even thoughtful ones) blame the régime for everything they deplore about the past without acknowledging the merits of what has been achieved between 1945 and 1958. The Fourth Republic "lost" Indo-China, Tunisia, and Morocco, but was the error in fighting to keep them, or in not consenting to a withdrawal in the British fashion? The majority of the Men of 13 May, the founders of the Fifth Republic, subscribe to the former view. I hold to the latter. True, we could find a measure of apparent agreement in the view that the governments of the Fourth Republic were not strong enough to impose reforms against the will of the spokesmen of the overseas French populations. Metropolitan opinion was divided; the preservation of the Empire was often presented as the continuation of the Resistance; in Indo-China, the enemy was Communist; in North Africa, France was defending her last chance of power...

M. Georges Bidault, whose contacts with reality, always intermittent, have become more and more rare, continues to plead in favour of the policy which has everywhere failed. He has no trouble showing the drawbacks of Tunisian or Moroccan independence; but he does not think about the alternative. Could the movement towards independence of the peoples of Asia and Africa stop, or be stopped, at the frontiers of the French Empire? The unanimity of feeling against the Fourth Republic has interrupted a debate which is not yet closed—the debate between those who rejected and those who accepted coming to terms with nationalism in Indo-China, in Tunisia, and in Morocco. I agree that another régime might have been more capable of carrying through the gradual, non-violent evolution of the protectorates and colonies towards independence. But was it the *système* or the *"ultras"* who prevented this policy and prolonged the status quo which led to the régime's collapse?

This question is a decisive one, for the chief failure of the Fourth Republic was "the loss of the Empire." For the rest, the record is an honourable one. In diplomacy, the main decisions were sound: the Atlantic Alliance, the reconciliation with Germany, the organisation of European unity. Perhaps our post-war diplomacy was imposed by circumstances rather than by free choice; it was perhaps confused and uncertain, and often paralysed, in execution. I would not want to deny it. But unless the destiny of the Republic is entrusted to one man, or democratic elections are so manipulated that the Assembly no longer truly reflects the nation, how could the country's rulers show inflexible resolution if the political class and the masses themselves are divided?

In the economic field, the post-war balance sheet exceeds the most sanguine hopes. Without going into elaborate detail, one might remind critics that the rise in the birth-rate and the expansion of the economy have opened up dazzling prospects of prosperity for France. During recent years, industry has grown by 10 per cent per annum and industrial productivity by 5–8 per cent; domestic raw material production (per head of population) increased by 34

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per cent between 1949 and 1958, by 50 per cent between 1938 and 1956.

This progress, one is told, has nothing to do with the system. A strange mode of reasoning; the system, not the French people or Vietnamese or Moslem nationalism, is responsible for the loss of the Empire, but it is the French people, and not the system, who must claim the credit for economic recovery.

Not that I have have any wish to attribute the dynamism shown by the nation over the last twelve years solely to the system. But the Fourth Republic—or the administration, if you like, rather than its ministers—was responsible for establishing priorities, modernising basic industries, and ensuring the necessary volume of investment. Between 1930 and 1939, the Third Republic presided over the collapse of the economy. Between 1946 and 1958, the Fourth Republic presided over a spectacular revival.

True: this revival was accompanied by inflation; the balance of payments is in deficit; vested interests have sometimes dictated unfortunate decisions. I am aware of the dark sides of the picture, and I did not wait for the Ides of May to denounce them. In spite of everything, however, when I hear our new heroes shrieking "never again"—*"jamais plus la IVe"*—I cannot help replying with the hope that, in economic matters, the *Ve* is a continuation of its predecessor. Contemplating the results achieved during the period 1945–1958, the economist murmurs *pourvu que cela dure*, "so long as it lasts!"

WHY do the French feel no gratitude towards the Fourth Republic for the recent prosperity? Many of them, in the well-known quirks of social psychology, just do not know it is there. Others are aware of it but think that this progress was achieved in spite of everything. Others again are more keenly conscious of the imperfections than the achievements. I do not mean to forget that economic growth creates new tensions and arouses bitterness among individuals and groups suddenly caught up in the hectic race for prosperity. A population, stagnant for half-a-century, which begins to multiply once more, an economy which plunges belatedly into industrialisation, with fifty-seven very young, or very old, for every hundred adults—such social changes are bound to create a climate of dissatisfaction. All this—together with the *loi-cadre* prepared for the establishment of "a Franco-African community," and the fact that, at the end of twelve years of the Fourth Republic, the Communist Party (though it had kept its voters) has lost its popular dynamic and its appeal—makes it difficult to decide whether France was a *"malade imaginaire"* or whether she was, in fact, going through the gravest crisis in her history. Now, surely, it depends on the people of France, and on them alone, whether their country goes into decline, or crosses the threshold of a new greatness.

For my own part, the cure would seem to be well on its way. Ten years from now, through the rejuvenation of the population and the modernisation of the economy, France may be the most vital and most prosperous country of Western Europe. But France must accept the fact that she is no longer in the front rank of world powers and realise that the loss of the Empire is an historical mutation for which she might have made better preparation but which she could not avoid. France must not repeat in Black Africa the mistakes committed in North Africa, nor must she prevent her African partners from remaining French in their own way, that is, from demanding and obtaining that independence the unique value of which we ourselves have taught them through our cult of Roman sovereignty. France must, without giving up her African mission, avoid obligations which, though not beyond her ambitions, are beyond her productive potential. Above all, the war in Algeria must not be allowed to continue indefinitely.

France has been and still is suffering from a strange melancholy. The loss of the Empire has been wrongly equated with national catastrophe; there are the painful internal divisions, which frustrate a common will and a coherent government; and there is also the very organic Algerian gangrene which has threatened to spread gradually both to France's *l'Afrique Noire* and to the metropolis. The Fourth Republic came to grief over the Algerian war because it was incapable either of winning it or ending it by negotiation. Was the dilemma only that of a régime, or was it of France herself?

SO IT was that, following a well-established tradition, General de Gaulle began his new reign by drawing up a new basic law; the men, perhaps, had been good, but it was the system that was bad.

The Constitution of the Fifth Republic is made *for* de Gaulle, just as that of the Fourth was made *against* him. The basis of the reform, it seems to me, is the idea that France, because of the structure of the political parties, could not find an effective and stable executive by using either the British or the American method. In order for a government originating from a parliamentary majority to carry the Assembly with it, it is essential that this majority should consist of a single party only, or a durable coalition. For a President, elected by universal suffrage, and a Congress, sometimes holding sharply divergent opinions, to work together, it

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is essential for the President to be the leader of a big party. If by their divisions the parties allow neither a legislative contract nor a presidential régime, the only solution is to reinforce the authority of the executive and to limit the power of the legislature by various constitutional clauses. This is the course that de Gaulle has chosen.

The President of the Republic is no longer a symbol, but holds a share of power. He chooses the Prime Minister, dissolves the Assembly, makes certain civil and military appointments; he can in certain circumstances submit a law to a referendum; he negotiates treaties; he is the head of the *Communauté* as well as head of the French State. Chosen by an electoral college of some 80,000 deputies, senators, mayors, and municipal councillors, he is a kind of sovereign. The drafters of the Constitution of 1875 had hoped that the descendant of the forty kings who, over a thousand years, had created France, would one day occupy the seat provisionally reserved for the President of the Republic. There is no indication that General de Gaulle cherishes any such hope.

Taken in isolation, none of the articles of the Constitution is in itself scandalising. Together, they take us back to the constitutional monarchy or the "parliamentary empire" of the middle of the last century.

In the immediate future, with General de Gaulle as President of the Republic, it would seem that the functioning of the new institutions is assured. But when a man in fact holds absolute power, any Constitution—even that of the Fourth Republic—can work. General de Gaulle had no need of this Constitution in order to govern. When he is no longer there, what will become of such a Constitution? What will happen with a President of the Henri Queuille type, elected by the mayors of communes of less than 2,000 inhabitants?

IN THE long run, the danger is that the text involves the over-representation of peasant France which is in the main static and conservative, and the under-representation of urban and industrial France. This injustice is apparent both in the electoral college responsible for choosing the President of the Republic and also in the restoration of the conservative Senate, in my opinion the most serious mistake committed by the men who drafted the Constitution.

For the moment, the future depends not so much on the Constitution as on the elections and on events in Africa. The Assembly will in any case be disciplined (or, if you like, "resigned"). It will provide a liberal façade for a régime which will in fact be authoritarian. But if, by means of the electoral law and Gaullist enthusiasm, the Right, represented by Messrs. Roger Duchet, Jacques Soustelle, and Georges Bidault, manages to obtain an absolute majority, this shadowy Assembly might drag the régime into adventures of which the simplest, and apparently the most profitable, would be the outlawing of the Communist Party. In my view the long-term consequences of such a step would be catastrophic. The Fourth Republic weakened the Communist Party by improving the standard of living of the masses. Persecution would restore its revolutionary dynamism.

The destiny of France will be even more markedly determined by Africa—by Algeria chiefly, but also by the development of relations with *l'Afrique Noire*. In both places, the actions and the words of General de Gaulle have been ambiguous. They could hardly have been otherwise if they were to win quasi-unanimous approbation. In Black Africa, he has half-subscribed to the liberal thesis that in the mid-20th century France must not and cannot refuse her colonies the right to independence; French sovereignty will not be maintained by force.

"La Communauté" is a combination of French sovereignty, internal autonomy of African territories, and semi-federal institutions. It represents a definite turning-point, and it temporarily reconciles the imperial mission of the French with the claims of the Africans. It would have been preferable to negotiate the terms of the *Communauté* with the representatives of the African countries on the basis of self-determination: renunciations of sovereignty might have been voluntarily offered and the territories would not have been so deeply torn by the quarrel between the supporters of "immediate independence" and the supporters of the *Communauté* or long-term independence.

Much will depend on the attitude the Government takes with regard to Guinea. General de Gaulle has committed himself to withholding from Guinea (which voted *"non"*) the advantages reserved for the "loyal" territories. But the suspension of loans is not the decisive point. What will be the future association with France? Will private investment continue or not? Will Guinea remain in the franc area? A complete break—the banishment of Guinea from the franc area and from the association of States foreseen in the Constitution—would be a fatal error, and the super-patriots are urging General de Gaulle to commit it. (The British do not pay for the administration of territories which have achieved independence, but they are careful not to advertise this obvious fact. Nor do they use threats to persuade colonies to forgo independence.) The very Frenchmen who cry, "Money counts for naught when honour or independence

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are at stake!" are the ones who are astonished when our African disciples begin making the same sounds.

As to Algeria, General de Gaulle has disappointed all parties without completely disillusioning any. The *rapprochement* with Tunisia and Morocco foreshadows the Maghreb Federation, but also the isolation of the F.L.N. The Algerians, having become full-fledged Frenchmen, may still acquire an autonomy which would not rule out further political evolution. Is an agreement with the F.L.N. still possible after the referendum? For how many more years must France continue to fight the F.L.N. supported by the Arab world? Or will the F.L.N., which is also split between *"ultras"* and moderates, disintegrate?

Since September 28th General de Gaulle has gone beyond the phase of organised equivocation. He has sketched the outlines of a bold five-year plan designed to improve the condition of the Moslem masses (200,000 dwellings; universal education; equal wages for Algerians; 400,000 additional jobs, etc.). This would seem to be a move in the direction of what is called *integration* (that is to say, a progressive drawing together of Algeria and the other *départements* of the Republic), but the word itself was not used, and both the *"ultras"* of the Right and the liberals, the advocates of integration and the advocates of reconciliation with the nationalists, could for different reasons go along.

The October letter to General Salan is something else again. With spectacular and almost brutal determination, General de Gaulle ordered the officers to withdraw from the "Committees of Public Safety," to refrain from having themselves nominated in the forthcoming elections, to allow all parties to conduct their propaganda freely (and that, in plain language, included the Algerian nationalists). The letter itself, and even more its publication, was an event of considerable importance. General de Gaulle might have let the Committee of Public Safety slowly fade out; but he decided to administer a *coup de grâce* in order to demonstrate the restoration of state authority and the end of the political rôle of the Army. There was another purpose as well: to prevent the election in Algeria of 66 deputies holding extremist views. The General is seeking a formula for autonomy which lies between integration and independence, and a plan for free elections (tolerable to the F.L.N.) between negotiation and war.

The difficulties must be obvious to everyone. Will the French army allow the Algerian nationalists to campaign openly for independence? Will Algerians be found (outside the F.L.N.) to stand as candidates? Will the F.L.N. agree to a cease-fire without having got anything more than autonomy and the prospects of further development than it promises? If the F.L.N. refuses to compromise, it may well be forced into full-scale alliance with Cairo and Moscow. Yesterday, French unanimity was based on the ambiguity of the General's intentions; to-day there is unanimity in support of his policy to achieve a compromise.

There are always millions of Frenchmen ready to make up for their customary hostility towards their Governments by passionate outbursts of political enthusiasm for a great man. Having failed to introduce an element of plebiscite into the democratic system (as do the British and American régimes), France oscillates between the anonymity of second-rate parliamentarians and the *éclat* of the charismatic leader. General de Gaulle has the charisma and also the historical ambitions of a Washington. He wants neither to prolong the Roman dictatorship which the Assembly has granted him, nor to use the function of legislator to make his reign permanent.

I have expressed my reservations about his work as legislator, but for the moment this is not important. The two basic questions, I think, are: Will he be driven, by the semi-fascists or the colonels, further along towards authoritarianism than he wants to go? And will he achieve a synthesis between the imperial ambitions of the French and the necessities of our century? In Black Africa this synthesis, in the form of the choice between secession and *Communauté*, is imperfect; but a more satisfactory evolution is not impossible. Vastly more difficult will be the achievement of such a synthesis in Algeria, where there are two extremes, and it seems almost impossible to find a middle way between the opposing slogans of integration and independence, or to reconcile the warring spokesmen.

"De Gaulle, dernière illusion?" Herbert Luthy asked recently. The die is not yet cast. For a few months General de Gaulle can do anything he likes; he can even make peace in Algeria. He can also demonstrate to his countrymen that they have only to accept France as she is, in the world as it is, for the road to the future to open straight before them.

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Germaine Tillion

The Terrorist

Testimony in Algiers

I MET M. Saadi Yacef, with his assistant, Mlle. Zorah Drif, on July 4th and August 9th, 1957, but I did not learn Yacef's name till our second meeting.

These meetings were only possible because I had spent, over more than twenty years, long periods in Algeria doing scientific research, and had made many friends among the Moslem population. From 1934 to 1940 I was engaged in scientific investigations in the Aurès mountains, collecting material on the peasant communities of the area. In May 1940, when I came back to Paris, I immediately tried to start a Resistance organisation, a branch of the network which came to be known as the *"Réseau Musée de l'Homme Hauet Vildé."* Of the four leaders of this organisation—Colonel de La Rochère, Boris Vildé, Colonel Hauet, and myself—I am the only survivor; the first was executed, and the two others died in concentration camps. I was myself arrested by the Gestapo on August 13th, 1942, and the indictment against me included five capital charges. After three years of imprisonment, I was repatriated to France on July 10th, 1945. Most of my scientific documents had been stolen by the German police....

In November 1954, Professor Massignon, who had once been my supervisor, asked me to go with him to see the Minister of the Interior, then M. François Mitterand. M. Mitterand assured us that there was no question of napalm bombing in the Aurès mountains (where the Algerian rebellion had just started), as had been rumoured. He suggested that I should go out there on an official mission and investigate the conditions in which certain tribes were going to be displaced.

I could not decently refuse this mission, and I departed in December. The moving of the tribes in the Aurès was completely pointless; but it was at least being carried out in a humane manner. For three months I travelled through the various valleys of the mountainous region, and I was appalled by their state of economic collapse.

In the meantime, M. Jacques Soustelle had been appointed Governor-General. I had known him twenty years before at the *Musée de l'Homme*, and it was to Soustelle that I reported, submitting a number of comments on the pauperisation of Algeria and on possible remedial measures. He asked me to stay on his staff as an attaché.

I remained on in Algiers in this capacity for almost a year (to February 1956), devoting most of my attention to the economic, ethnic, and social factors in the Algerian problem. When I proposed to M. Soustelle the establishment of a department of what we were to call "Social Centres," he gave me his complete support.

GERMAINE TILLION, a distinguished ethnologist, is a Director of Studies at the Sorbonne's "L'École Pratique des Hautes Études." She has lived and studied in North Africa for many years, and a translation of her book on "Algeria: The Realities" has recently been published. In giving ENCOUNTER *her text, Mme. Tillion has reminded us that she asked to be allowed to testify before the court in Algiers, but she was not summoned as a witness. Her testimony was written immediately after the arrest (in late September 1957) of Saadi Yacef, F.L.N. commander of the Algiers area, and his assistant Zorah Drif, and it was subsequently read in evidence. Zorah Drif was sentenced to twenty years, Yacef to death.*

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When M. Robert Lacoste replaced M. Soustelle, I postponed my return to France for three months at the request of the latter, in order to prepare a plan for the enforcement of universal education in Algeria.

In my book called *L'Algérie en 1957*,* I tried to explain the process which leads to the collapse of under-developed countries. I argued that it was an absolute necessity for Algeria to live in a state of economic symbiosis with France. This little book is the origin of the facts about which I am giving evidence, that is to say my talks with Saadi Yacef.

ON JUNE 18th, 1957, I took the plane to Algiers, with four other members of the *Commission internationale contre le régime concentrationnaire*. M. Louis Martin-Chauffier and I were nominated to accompany three foreign colleagues on an investigation in Algeria. In the course of the trip I saw many old friends, officers, officials, and settlers. I also met many imprisoned Moslems whom I either knew personally or through their families, and who therefore talked to me as these people will when they know there is no prejudice against them. Having been away from Algeria for a year, I was struck by the extent to which clandestine political organisation had developed. What was even more impressive than its scale was what might be called the *style* of the operation; the lightning rapidity with which it had been carried through was only one aspect of this. I have always thought that a military victory in Algeria was technically possible. A Resistance movement can be stamped out by annihilating all of its networks, no matter where they are—if one is ready to pay the price. But it seemed clear to me now that these various political cells would simply start growing all over again soon after military defeat.

In the last days of the journey, I was told by a Moslem woman whom I knew that "some people" wanted to ask me some questions about my book. She did not know who these people were, but she thought they were important. When I wrote my book, I had hoped to draw the attention of Moslem opinion to the extreme dangers of complete and unconditional Algerian independence. Moreover, I was convinced that, as it was being fought by the two sides, there was no way out of the war. I agreed to the meeting.

The arrangement was that I should follow an Algerian who was pointed out to me. This man led me, by a complicated route, to the spot where the meeting was to take place. In fairness to the people who had trusted me, I made a point of paying no attention to the details of the route we followed.

I was shown into a room where two young women were waiting for me. One of them (as I learned on the day of her arrest) was Zorah Drif. A few minutes later, two men arrived. They were dressed in khaki and both of them had tommy-guns in their hands; they also had, I think, one or two pistols in their belts. The five persons who were there had apparently not met for many months, and they greeted each other with some feeling. I was introduced to the smaller of the two men with the words: "This is Big Brother" (*le Grand Frère*) and then to the other who was described as "our famous Ali the Knife" (*Ali la Pointe*).

I said good-day, and everyone sat down. There was a short silence, which I deliberately allowed to go on for a moment or two. Then I said good-naturedly to my companions: "I was told you wanted to see me. Here I am. What do you have to say?"

They were obviously taken aback, and all of them looked towards the man they called *"le Grand Frère."* (This, as I later learned, was Saadi Yacef.) He looked embarrassed, and stammered out that he had read my book and he had wanted to ask me a few questions about it. All the same, he added, it would be better if I could discuss the whole thing with the five members of the Committee, for they were the only ones who could take important decisions.

I knew absolutely nothing about the "Committee." They told me what it was: the *Comité de coordination et d'exécution*, the body which runs the clandestine political and military organisation of Moslem Algeria. I replied that I could not talk to the members of this body without the authorisation of my Government, and I tried to make my position clear: "You know I'm neither a Communist nor a fellow-traveller, but a patriotic Frenchwoman." They replied, in chorus, that they were quite well aware of that, that this was in fact the reason they were so pleased to talk to me.

THE conversation began at quarter to three in the afternoon and went on till half past seven. Since the origin of the meeting had been the book I had written on the social and economic problems of Algeria, and since nobody had asked me any specific questions, I began with a long monologue. I talked about wages and the necessity of universal education, about the steady inevitable collapse of the under-developed areas, except if in economic symbiosis, etc. Yacef interrupted me and said thoughtfully: "We don't

* *Algeria: The Realities*. By GERMAINE TILLION (translated by Ronald Matthews). Eyre and Spottiswoode. 10s. 6d.

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think about these things often enough." He then raised a number of practical objections which gave me an opportunity to clarify my views.

A little later he asked me, in a rather anxious voice, "How do you think it will all end?"

I was very pessimistic, replying bluntly, "There's no reason why it should end. The F.L.N. will never defeat the French army, and though the French army might crush the rebellion temporarily, I see no possibility of their stamping it out for good. If some day in the future, France wearies of the constant drain of men and treasure, and decides to conclude the war, I don't see how the Algerian workers could possibly retain the privileged position they enjoy now on the French labour market. In that case, this whole country would be doomed to rapid decline."

If on paper there were in Algeria eight million Moslems and just over a million Europeans, which appeared to represent an eight to one balance of forces, this was only appearance and theory. In reality, the strength of a community was not a mere function of its numbers, but depended far more on technical attainments and capital at its disposition. If there had been fewer Europeans, the Tunisian solution would have been possible; if there had been fewer Moslems, the integration of Algeria with France might have been feasible....

At this point, Yacef exclaimed, *"In that case I shall never be a free man."* He was not speaking aggressively or angrily; it was in genuine despair.

The question of under-development led me to talk about famine; I said I was probably the only person in the room who knew exactly how a man perishes of hunger, and I told some personal stories. Then I spoke of the cases of wartime arrests and the police spies who had played such havoc among us—"that is what is hardest of all to forgive."

Yacef interrupted me impulsively. "Oh, if only all this would end, I'd forgive everyone!"

The conversation strayed for a while to the French Resistance, and the sufferings it had endured. Then they began to talk to me about the tortures that were going on in Algeria, and particularly in Algiers. I was able to reply that I was almost as well-informed on this subject as they were, and that indeed it was the reason for my present journey. I explained what the "International Commission Against the Concentration Camp Régime" was, and I told them that it was the non-Communist French *déportés* who had asked for this investigation.

Someone (I do not recall who) mentioned the name of Melouza. This prompted one of the very few remarks of the man who had been introduced to me as "Ali the Knife." He said with some vigour, "That wasn't us." I replied that he was mistaken—for I had just come back from Melouza, where I had questioned the survivors of the massacre myself, and I could, therefore, personally state that there was not the least doubt of the F.L.N.'s responsibility. Ali's chief motioned to him to hold his tongue. I think it was then that I talked about the mutilations and throat-cuttings.

YACEF listened to me with consternation. But he did not protest. I could not resist saying that he could see for himself how unfair it was to saddle an entire community with the crimes committed by a few of its members, and that what was *unfair* where *he* was concerned was just as unfair where *we* were. (I should mention here that on a later journey I heard from one of Yacef's collaborators that orders had been issued forbidding the barbaric practices of which I had spoken—but I do not know whether these orders were in fact given, nor when.)

My companions had listened to me with attention, and they had talked as I did, with complete frankness. Of course, they knew my work, and they were aware of my respect and friendship for their fellow-countrymen. In addition, my experience of underground work, and what we suffered and felt in the course of it, fascinated them because of the similarities they found with their own troubles. They sensed the compassion that this parallel inspired in me.

Then Yacef, with a faint smile, said, "So you can see that we are neither criminals nor murderers."

Very sadly, very firmly, I replied: "You are murderers." He was taken aback. He did not speak for a moment or two; it was as if he were choking. Then his eyes filled with tears, and he said: "Yes, Madame Tillion, we are murderers." Then he told me a few details about the outrage at the Casino. He added that when he had heard about them, he had cried for three days and three nights. In this latter part of the conversation, tears came to his eyes on three or four separate occasions; and when he talked to me about the Casino outrage they rolled down his cheeks.

At one stage I tried to make the point that "terrorism justifies torture, for the one group—and, for the other, the tortures and the executions justify the terrorism. It is a complete and vicious circle, and there is no breaking out of it."

At another, Yacef burst out violently, "Oh, those bombs! I'd like to see them all at the bottom of the sea."

I replied, "Don't let me stop you. I'd gladly

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give you a hand if you wanted to dump them there."

He retorted, in a miserable voice, "It is our only way of getting a hearing." I believe he repeated these words several times. For my part, I repeated that "innocent blood cries out for vengeance."

I FEEL certain that when Yacef arranged for our meeting he had no intention of talking to me about his *crise de conscience*. He had so little intention of doing so, indeed, that he had deliberately concealed his name and for the reason that it had become a synonym for terrorism in the Algiers press and that he was afraid that it would put me off. Still, the whole affair was so improvised that although all was to be in secrecy, he told me right off the name of his bodyguard, Ali the Knife (whose reputation was no better than his own).

In talking with me he seemed always spontaneous and natural. In the course of our conversations, I received a sense of the life he had been living for the last two years, hunted day and night by several thousand soldiers, in a space no larger than the *Jardin du Luxembourg*. His was a crushing physical and intellectual burden, and he was practically without material means in trying to co-ordinate the entire political-military organisation in Algiers and (temporarily) over the whole of Algeria. He apparently inspired deep respect among his subordinates, and because of that respect, he was expected to assume responsibility for everything in every field. So he had to wrestle alone with his moral dilemmas. I believe that the unexpected turns of our conversation precipitated a decision that he had probably been considering for some time.

Almost abruptly, he said to me: "I give you my word that from now on the civilian population will not be touched."

I was petrified by his words. I said I represented nobody, and I was in no position to give any kind of reciprocal commitment. He replied, "That does not matter. It is to you I want to give this promise, and I am giving it to you."

Some time later, in speaking of executions, I said, "But if the executions continue, will your promise hold?" He burst out violently, "In that case, I can't answer for anything."

It is clear that when executions take place, the pressure of Moslem opinion on the underground leadership is so strong that they are *forced* (if only to show they are *there*, and that they share the feelings of the population) to indicate their sentiments by some action.

Incidentally, I made it clear that I felt obliged to make a report of the meeting to my government. Yacef shrugged his shoulders. "Do as you please. It is all the same to us." He added that, as far as he was concerned, what he wanted was for me to discuss the economic problems of Algeria with the five leaders of the Committee. As he saw it, the essential aim of such a meeting would be to give the men whom he regarded as bearing the responsibility for running Algeria some idea of these problems. They were, for him, very serious matters, and he thought Moslem opinion had not paid sufficient attention to them. But he stressed the fact that his own views were of no great consequence. For my own part, I could scarcely go into these matters without governmental authorisation.

At half-past-seven, I brought the discussion to an end.

In leaving, I turned first to the two young women who had been sitting on my right. The fair young woman, Zorah Drif, had once or twice joined in with a remark or two, but the other had taken no part in the conversation. I hadn't the faintest idea what their reactions had been to the long dialogue. I held out my hand to them, and one of them kissed me. I suddenly sensed how much they had felt it all. I was deeply affected myself, and I said to them, "I beg you to use your influence to protect the innocent." They both nodded gravely. Then I turned to the man who had been introduced to me as Ali the Knife. I took hold of him by his shirt-collar, shook him a little, and said, "Did you understand what I said? Innocent blood cries out for vengeance." "Yes, madame," he answered, in a frightened voice.

Finally, I held out my hand to Saadi Yacef. He clasped it between his own with much feeling. "Thank you for having talked to us as you did." Then I left with the guide. As on the outward journey coming out, I made a point of not looking at the path we took.

A WEEK later I was in Paris with the other members of the Commission. On Monday, July 8th, I made a full report of the conversation to my friends in the Prime Minister's office. I concluded by putting forward my personal viewpoint on the Algerian problem.

The hysteria among the two communities was forming an almost insurmountable obstacle to any solution. It was necessary not only to work out a mutually acceptable way of settling the war but also (whatever the form of the settlement) not to execute it until the hatred and the terror had abated.

The European population is understandably panic-stricken over the outrages. They feel provoked to violent reactions. The effect is the exact reverse of their hope which is, of course, the cessation of the terror. Fear-possessed, the Europeans insist (through their official or their secret

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representatives) on executions, arrests, and general toughness. The enemy must be destroyed. But the enemy is not yet destroyed, and there is meanwhile only an increase in the outrages. Even if the objective were to be achieved, could the results be anything more than temporary?

On the other hand, the Moslem community is almost unanimous in regarding the men condemned to death as national heroes; it is roused to a frenzy of aggression and despair every time there is an execution. It insists that there shall be a terrorist reply, although this can only lead to a wave of repression of which the Moslems are bound to be the first victims.

If the Algerian nationalists had completely refrained from outrages against the civilian population, there would perhaps have been a few, but only a few, cases of torture. If the French army had been perfectly disciplined and had been able to refrain from any kind of brutality, there would perhaps have been a few, but only a few, outrages. But the two sides have resigned themselves to a policy of unlimited reprisals, and the situation has gone from bad to worse. I suggested that executions should be suspended as long as there were no outrages. I was told that my proposal seemed reasonable, and that it would be looked into.

In a second conversation in the Prime Minister's office, I was told that the Government had wanted for a long time to know the real views of the political and military leaders of the F.L.N. It also wanted to put before them its own views on the future of Algeria. There was no question of "negotiations," but merely of a private conversation which might possibly—if the opposing standpoints were not too far apart—lead to a genuine conference. I was to agree to go back to Algeria to meet with the Committee, and I was also to agree to do it at my own risk.

There were obvious dangers involved, but I agreed all the same, partly out of patriotism, partly out of concern for the tragedy in Algeria. I attached one condition to my agreement: there was to be no question of my being used without my knowledge to get at the trusting people I would be meeting. A word of honour was given, and I had no further objections. All the same I took every possible precaution to ensure that the proposed meeting should entail no risks for the people I was going to meet.

I SET out on my second journey on Wednesday, July 24th. That was the final day of the Algiers trial of the men and women who had been assistants in the Social Centres which had been established on my recommendation when I had been on the Governor-General's staff.

Before I left, I talked with my friend M. Louis Mangin, who was a member of the Prime Minister's staff. He broke it to me very tactfully that three executions were at any moment going to take place in Algiers.

The news came as a shock. Its immediate consequence would be a resumption of the outrages against the innocent population; its long-term result would be to widen the gulf of hatred which every day divided the two communities a little more. I am afraid, also, that I have become especially sensitive about such things. Ten of my comrades in the Resistance group of the *Musée de l'Homme* were arrested in February 1941. For a full year, until their execution, I tried to organise their defence and get their sentences commuted. The night before their execution, one of the lawyers asked me to break the news to the families, and at the end of this hideous day, since I never seem to be able to believe the worst, I made one more attempt to save them. They had already been shot. The next day I was given the diary of one of the executed; it included details of the bit of treachery which had delivered them all into the hands of the Gestapo. The steps I undertook against the traitor, and the organisation of the escape of three other men under death sentence, were responsible for my own arrest, which took place on Friday, August 13th, 1942. Month after month, several times a week, I had to say good-bye to comrades who were being taken out to the execution squad. The indignation, the grief, and the fury which I felt then are still alive in me to-day.

ALL the same, I had agreed to go. Three days later I took the plane for Algiers. But I left sick at heart, terrified at the incoherence of our policy which held out no hope for any possible reconciliation.

On the evening of my arrival, I heard the verdict of the trial which had just ended; I met with counsel in the case and several of the defendants who had been acquitted and set at liberty. The facts were awful: kidnappings and tortures which the innocence of the victims admitted by the court made even more intolerable.

The next morning, talking with one of the lawyers, I learned that the three executions (of which I had been warned) had taken place during the night; he had been present.

On Saturday, eight bombs went off in Algiers. I happened to be not far away from one of the explosions, and I did my best to get to the spot of the outrage at once to see whether or not there had been any civilian victims. I had made up my mind to go back to Paris at once if there were. I am neither a diplomat nor a soldier; nobody could force me to go ahead against my will. Now I was determined to turn back unless I could begin by securing a suspension of the automatic sequences of outrages, tortures, and executions.

There had been no civilian victims, and I put

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it down at the time to an extraordinary bit of luck. But contrary to what had been expected, it was impossible to make contact with a single member of the Committee; all of them were understood to be outside Algeria. It was, therefore, agreed that I should have a second conversation with Saadi Yacef.

This took place on Friday, August 9th. I had made it quite clear in advance that I would be speaking purely for myself, though with the authorisation of my Government. Saadi Yacef had let me know just as unequivocally that any decision about possible negotiations was the exclusive responsibility of the Committee. Our main object was thus to prepare the way.

SAADI YACEF arrived, as he did the first time, with his tommy-gun in his hand. But he was very much at ease and began by saying, with a chuckle, "I hear you missed a bombing."

I replied very stiffly that if there had been a single civilian victim I should not have come; I would have packed my bag and left for Paris at once. "We should thank God," I said.

"I know how you feel," he answered, in the same lighthearted tone. "So I took all the necessary precautions. It is not God you must thank, but me."

I said, very seriously, "You are right, Monsieur, and I do thank you. I thank you all the more because there was not the humanity on our side that I had hoped for."

Zorah Drif was there, as she had been the first time. We all discussed the problems before us frankly and directly: the various approaches towards a possible agreement, and the chances of discussing them with the absent members of the Committee. Saadi Yacef said, "If I get the necessary orders, I shall need forty-eight hours to secure a cease-fire all over Algeria." Then he thought a moment, and corrected himself: "I shall need three days."

In his view, the decision (which he accepted in advance) could be taken by no one but the sole body whose authority he recognised, the *Comité de coordination et d'exécution*. As to his personal opinions (which he continued to express with the utmost freedom) they seemed to me both sensible and moderate, though they were always in keeping with his fixed ideal.

Familiar as I am with the astonishing paradoxes of Algeria, I was not surprised to hear him express, again and again, a real affection for France and for French civilisation and culture. He showed real feeling when he spoke of Paris, and sympathy when he talked of our younger generation. He never failed to express his fervent hope that once the objective of freedom had been attained, it would be possible, at long last, to establish and consolidate genuinely close links. He did not conceal his distrust for the forces who were profiting from chronic misunderstanding. More than that, he seemed to me to have a realistic grasp of the difficulties of national independence—still, for this ideal (as he also told me repeatedly) he was ready to die.

The next day (Saturday, August 10th), I went to make a reservation on the first available plane. It was the holiday season, and I could not get a place before Monday. On Sunday I heard from some Moslems that there had been two further executions in Algiers. They could not conceal their fear and their repugnance at the thought of what was to come.

I knew that there was no chance of avoiding reprisals. All the same, I decided to write a letter to Saadi Yacef, pleading with him to take the responsibility for stopping the vicious circle of death. Although it had been impossible for me to put a brake on the French side of this savage and stupid process, I asked him to be generous and intelligent enough to take this moderate decision *on his own* and *with no guarantee of reciprocity*.

In reply to this letter, he sent word to me that there would be no reprisals. And there were none.

Now I want to make it clear that by this date the F.L.N. networks which had been put out of action in February, March, and April, had all been started up again, and were intact in their new form. There is sufficient proof for this. I am therefore convinced that not only did Saadi Yacef say he would stop the attacks on the French civilian population, but that he did in fact stop them, and stopped them all over Algeria. My conviction is based on the immediate, general, and otherwise inexplicable cessation of terrorism as from July 4th, which was the date of my first meeting with Saadi Yacef, and the efforts to resume terrorism which followed immediately on his arrest on September 25th.

I feel equally certain that the reasons for his decision to halt the violence were first and foremost moral ones—a desire to spare innocent lives. His was patently genuine emotion when he unburdened himself to me (spontaneously, in my opinion) about his appalling *débat de conscience*. His views on political matters—the interdependent links between the French and Algerian peoples; the necessity for them to work with each other and find some basis for understanding; as well as his deep, sincere desire to see successful negotiations—all undoubtedly helped to confirm his decision. He was thus able to justify himself in the eyes of his subordinates and of the only F.L.N. body which he regarded as having absolute powers of policy, the Committee....

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OLGA KATZIN

Yet Once More O Ye Laurels. . . .

(A Prophecy)

THE Poet Laureate, being of sound mind
And of his faculties in full possession,
Respected and admired, had just resigned,
(Regardless of the problems of succession)
Laid down the lyre, the crown with laurel twined,
As leader of an honourable profession.
His truthful Muse could draw no inspiration
From Britain's spectacle of degradation.

The Laureateship endured State supervision
Vested in occupants of Downing Street,
And now the Premier burdened with decision
Was painfully aware that he would meet
Antagonism, odium and derision
If he should inadvertently repeat
The ghastly error of that predecessor
Who nominated Tennyson's successor.

But yet the chosen name must be disclosed
And soon; the Royal Household was affected,
Whose members are not normally exposed,
To question, nor to scrutiny subjected.
The Master of Court Music unopposed
Had lately been in privacy selected,
And so must be the Poet, placed between
Him and the Head Bargemaster of the Queen.

It had been said—it might be well—perhaps,
The office of State poet should become
Extinct and inconspicuously lapse,
Few being conscious of the vacuum;
And stopping-up the Ministerial gaps
Was certainly a lot less troublesome,
But now the Premier was on his mettle
And would not hesitate to grasp the nettle.

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Too many were too readily persuaded
  The glories of our blood and State were flown
While rival Powers their cultural pride paraded;
  But our poetic trumpet must be blown,
Proving the Muse's laurels still unfaded,
  And he her knight would seek—and find—alone.
(There fortunately was no obligation
To call the Commonwealth in consultation.)

He knew exactly what the job required,
  A modern poet but in the great tradition,
By ancient pride, by present hope inspired
  And not without some public recognition;
A patriot passion was to be desired
  But he need be no party politician—
The poetry of Governmental policies
Had reached its peak in Hailsham's song, and Hollis's.

Both were so right—and yet it would not do
  Honour and honorarium to split;
He'd be accused of favouritism too
  And never live to hear the last of it.
Further afield the quest he must pursue,
  Picking a bard so eminently fit
That not the most malign or hypercritical
Would dare to call the preference political.

One was there who the title might inherit,
  Whom even envy's tongue could not contemn,
His works so famed, of such surpassing merit
  All imitated, none could rival them;
The prophet of the age and leading spirit,
  Of English literature the G.O.M.,
Still vocal in his voluntary captivity—
But alien stars had smiled on his nativity.

The Laureate must be of British birth,
  Cradled in immemorial English ways,
A body of England born of English earth,
  Of new Elizabethan spacious days
The harbinger; there surely was no dearth
  Of such, and he who sang his country's praise
With most authoritative, authentic voice
Would be the Premier's instinctive choice.

O poet-paragon, first among peers,
  In range exceeding all contemporaries,
As the lark trilling in celestial spheres
  Outsings whole choruses of caged canaries,
Who and where was he? On the Premier's ears
  From town and country aviaries and aeries
Burst cataracts of premeditated song
Such as had not been heard for centuries long.

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Compelled by an imperative obsession
How many were in singing robes arrayed!
Though owing to traditional depression
Inseparable from the poet's trade,
Most followed an alternative profession;
Some into Nationalised Boards had strayed,
The Civil Service still contained a pool of them,
The BBC was absolutely full of them.

In coigns where coteries most bred and haunted
This multitude was now on tenterhooks,
Though none unblushingly his talent vaunted
They all responded with what grateful looks
When dear companions their achievements flaunted
(They read, and sometimes wrote, each other's books)
For, part-time poets all the workday week,
Many on Sundays could as critics speak.

And speak with warm co-operative fervour
The rising generation to present,
Both in *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*,
As entrants for the classical event,
They did; and when one praised another's *œuvre*
His protégé returned the compliment,
Asking the crown for the unwrinkled brow
Of some contributor to "Poetry Now".

For as Chinese a twin can recognise
Apart from his identical twin brother
Though both appear to Occidental eyes,
Like all Chinese, exactly like each other,
Among contenders for the poet's prize
These could distinguish one voice from another,
Where the outsider heard but one entire
Chaotic and unregulated choir.

"Watkins" they cried "his earlier art transcends,
Graham's rare promise mellows to maturity,
Larkin sums up contemporary trends,
Causey explores a vein of primal purity,
Conquest, experiment with polish blends,
And if Gascoigne and Bottrall choose obscurity,
Their cabbalistic runes and riddles cryptic
Exemplify the group apocalyptic."

This boost for the poetic overspill
With acid, supercilious smiles was greeted
By circles higher up the Muse's hill
Where veterans for some decades had been seated;
Senior competitors but singing still,
Their sheaves were bound but by no means completed.
It riled these pioneer *enfants terribles*
To be considered dotards old and feeble.

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Meantime the Premier, politely prodded
  By the Lord Chamberlain to name the bard,
Through Heinemann's, Chatto's, Faber's Spring Lists plodded.
  He'd never thought that it would be so hard
To find the needful attributes embodied
  Either in elders or the *avant garde.*
Whose youthful ardour, whose urbane sedateness
Could best express the present time of greatness?

He read on, growing more and more annoyed
  With songs of youth, so bitingly sarcastic;
Youth, steeped in pessimism unalloyed,
  Crude, disillusioned and inconoclastic,
Riddled with Rimbaud, warped by Marx and Freud,
  Sodden with sex, emotionally spastic!
Never would poets be by him appointed
With syntax so appalling disjointed!

O for a draught of Georgians who had been
  Cooled by long rambling in the open air,
Singing the rustic and domestic scene,
  Sweet antidotes to cynical despair,
And never unmelodious or obscene!
  O for Drinkwater! Davies! De la Mare!
Not Wordsworths, Donnes or Miltons, but at anyrate
Not blasphemous or beastly or degenerate.

But what availed this fruitless lamentation
  For lovesome lyrics wrought by minds at peace?
He must make do with poets in circulation,
  And their poor best appoint *before* decease.
Advisers put up for consideration
  Day Lewis, Spender, Empson and MacNiece
Who, he was told, might represent the age, or
Be ultimately classified as major.

They named an eligible Lauriette
  As well, not be shunned on grounds of gender,
Whom he, though loth, now added to the set—
  MacNiece, Day Lewis, Empson, Sitwell, Spender.
Not one of them, he noted with regret,
  Sang England's glorious past and royal splendour;
God knows for what they stood, but there was none for
His country; all implied that she was done for.

Now after painful and prolonged reflection,
  Being burdened with affairs of greater weight,
The Premier bethought him that selection
  Might be transferred to hirelings of the State,
The Council of the Arts, whose Poetry Section
  Was ever ready to adjudicate—
Itself entrusted with a Treasury grant,
To tend and water the Parnassian plant.

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The Poetry Panel who were not invited
Too often by Prime Ministers to speak,
Foregathered, unaffectedly delighted
That one so great should their opinion seek;
But soon confessed themselves so disunited
On niceties of texture and technique
That though invested with complete authority
To vote, they failed to muster a majority.

And all the while, like phantoms, near at hand
There loomed those two, so widely celebrated;
The first, who had discovered the Waste Land,
Whither the Muse long since had emigrated,
The second, who had there his roaring band
Of Bachelors of Arts co-Audenated,
But both must be debarred without an option,
One alien by birth, one by adoption.

Things by this time were coming to a crisis
And the Prime Minister about him cast
For more Olympian counsels and advices,
So the vexed question was discreetly passed
To seats of learning on the Cam and Isis,
Whence from their rushy beds came footing fast
Deans, Doctors, Dons, who with disputes incessant
Evaluated poetry past and present.

Alas! For once, Oxford and Cambridge colleges
Declared with most regrettable accord,
"*Him you must choose whose claim the world acknowledges*
But you have unaccountably ignored,
Or ever after strive with lame apologies
To justify a chauvinist award.
He may be foreign-born, but this is certain—
All trace of Harvard's exorcised by Merton."

The Premier these distinguished intercessors
Heard, but the Kingdom's prestige was at stake.
Statesmen responsible (unlike professors)
Duty and principle could not forsake.
Resistant to external cultural pressures
He no American would Laureate make,
Accordingly he vetoed their suggestion—
This was no merely academic question.

Now the short-list he desperately reshuffled,
But like one with the hound of heaven in chase,
A presence sensed, familiar though muffled,
A step approaching with unhurried pace;
He seemed to see before him that unruffled
Patient and passive but predestined face,
And wavered, by this apparition visited,
And deluged with opinions unsolicited.

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For all conspired to sabotage the plan
For choosing with discretion and decorum;
Excitement through the town like wildfire ran
Outside the Downing Street sanctum sanctorum.
The BBC itself turned partisan
And treacherously announced an open forum
Although its help it was not asked to give
In exercising his prerogative.

Each literary clique, each poet's party
Spoke out, no longer mutely standing by;
Not only intellectuals and the arty
Who itched to have a finger in the pie,
But lowbrows and the anti-*literati*
Came out in force to swell the hue and cry,
While nothing could restrain the fearlessness
And independence of the British press.

Listing the bards on whom the public doted,
Warning of danger in delay too long,
The Times now for bucolic Blunden voted
(The *Lit. Supp.* pushing Barker, thought it wrong)
Betjeman *The Daily Telegraph* promoted,
The Sunday Pic. demanded Patience Strong,
While hollowly from the unquiet grave
A voice boomed 'Edith Sitwell you must have.'

Though poets held aloof in proud seclusion
Fanatic followers they could not control,
Incensed by Court and Government collusion,
Who agitated for a public poll.
In scenes of indescribable confusion
The maddened mob approved a voters' roll,
Highly resolved to wrest the Laureateship
From the Lord Chamberlain's and Premier's grip.

But now, faced with rebellion—nay, sedition—
The Premier realised he was in a spot
(Which fact had not escaped the Opposition)
And with one master-stroke he stopped the rot,
Promptly resorting to a Royal Commission
To choose the Laureate, since he could not.
A sovereign constitutional device
For putting burning topics on the ice.

Experts he summoned who from time to time
Had sat on hanging, vice and immorality,
On prostitution, adolescent crime,
Mental disease and homosexuality;
And though the field of prosody and rhyme
Might not exactly be their speciality,
In his considered view the cause of art is
Best served by quite disinterested parties.

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For be opinion never so inflamed,
  Never to such extremes of violence tending
Yet it would instantaneously be tamed,
  He knew, so long as their Report was pending.
So active intervention he disclaimed
  While privacy and privilege defending,
Completely confident that if he fell,
  As he soon after did, all would be well.

The Household, filled with awful apprehension
  While PEN Club agitators roamed at large,
Applauded the Prime Minister's intention
  Not to lay down but to postpone his charge;
Far better hold that office in suspension
  Next to the Master of the royal barge
Than have crazed Audenite and wild Sitwellian
Fanning the flames of cultural rebellion.

Long might the Laureateship be undecided,
  Years pass before they published the Report,
But one would ultimately be provided
  Whom the Lord Chamberlain could bring to Court.
Meantime all vulgar tumult had subsided,
  And public memory's so extremely short
None soon would care whose brow the garland wore—
So once more, O ye laurels, and once more. . . .

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Arthur Koestler

The Sleepwalker

Johannes Kepler, and the Psychology of Discovery

IN THE index to the six hundred-odd pages of Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History*, abridged version, the names of Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, and Newton do not occur. This one example among many should be sufficient to indicate the gulf that still separates the Humanities from the Philosophy of Nature. I use this outmoded expression because the term "Science," which has come to replace it in more recent times, does not carry the same rich and universal associations which "Natural Philosophy" carried in the 17th century, in the days when Kepler wrote his *Harmony of the World* and Galileo his *Message from the Stars*. For those men who created the upheaval which we call the "Scientific Revolution" called it by a quite different name: the "New Philosophy." The revolution in technology which their discoveries triggered off was an unexpected by-product; their aim was not the conquest of Nature, but the understanding of Nature. Yet their cosmic quest destroyed the mediæval vision of an immutable social order in a walled-in universe together with its fixed hierarchy of moral values, and transformed the European landscape, society, culture, habits, and general outlook, as thoroughly as if a new species had arisen on this planet.

This mutation of the European mind in the 17th century is merely the latest example of the impact of the "Sciences" on the "Humanities"—of the enquiry into the nature of Nature on the enquiry into the nature of Man. It also illustrates the wrongheadedness of erecting academic and social barriers between the two; a fact which is at last beginning to gain recognition, nearly half a millennium after the Renaissance discovered the *uomo universale*.

Another result of this fragmentation is that there exist Histories of Science, which tell one at what date the mechanical clock or the law of inertia made their first appearance, and Histories of Astronomy which inform one that the precession of the equinoxes was discovered by Hipparchus of Alexandria; but, surprisingly, there exists to my knowledge no modern History of Cosmology, no comprehensive survey of man's changing vision of the universe which encloses him.

The above explains what this book is aiming at, and what it is trying to avoid. It is not a history of astronomy, though astronomy comes in where it is needed to bring the vision into sharper focus; and, though aimed at the general reader, it is not a book of "popular science" but a personal and speculative account of a controversial subject. It opens with the Babylonians and ends with Newton, because we still live in an essentially Newtonian universe; the cosmology of Einstein is as yet in a fluid state, and its influence on culture it is too early to assess.

There are several *Leitmotifs* running through this narrative. Firstly, the twin threads of Science and Religion, starting with the undistinguishable unity of the mystic and the savant in the Pythagorean Brotherhood, falling apart and reuniting again, now tied up in knots, now running on parallel courses, and ending in the polite and deadly "divided house of faith and reason" of our day, where, on both sides, symbols have hardened into dogmas, and the common source of inspiration is lost from view. A study of the evolution of cosmic awareness in the past may help to find out whether a new departure is at least conceivable, and on what lines.

Secondly, I have been interested for a long time, in the psychological process of discovery

This first instalment from Arthur Koestler's forthcoming THE SLEEPWALKERS: A HISTORY OF MAN'S CHANGING VISION OF THE UNIVERSE, *starts with excerpts from the author's preface, followed by the first part of a "profile" of Kepler from the middle section of the book.*

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as the most concise manifestation of man's creative faculty—and in that converse process that blinds him towards truths which, once perceived by a seer, become so heartbreakingly obvious. Now this black-out shutter operates not only in the minds of the "ignorant and superstitious masses" as Galileo called them, but is even more strikingly evident in Galileo's own, and in other geniuses like Aristotle, Ptolemy, or Kepler. It looks as if, while part of their spirit was asking for more light, another part had been crying out for more darkness. The History of Science is a relative newcomer on the scene, and the biographers of its Cromwells and Napoleons are as yet little concerned with psychology; their heroes are mostly represented as reasoning-machines on austere marble pedestals, in a manner long outdated in the mellower branches of historiography—probably on the assumption that in the case of a Philosopher of Nature, unlike that of a statesman or conqueror, character and personality are irrelevant. Yet all cosmological systems, from the Pythagoreans to Copernicus, Descartes and Eddington, reflect the unconscious prejudices, the philosophical or even political bias of their authors; and from physics to physiology, no branch of Science, ancient or modern, can boast freedom from metaphysical bias of one kind or another. The progress of Science is generally regarded as a kind of clean, rational advance along a straight ascending line; in fact it has followed a zig-zag course, at times almost more bewildering than the evolution of political thought. The history of cosmic theories, in particular, may without exaggeration be called a history of collective obsessions and controlled schizophrenias; and the manner in which some of the most important individual discoveries were arrived at reminds one more of a sleep-walker's performance than an electronic brain's.

Thus, in taking down Copernicus or Galileo from the pedestal on which science-mythography has placed them, my motive was not to "debunk," but to enquire into the obscure workings of the creative mind. Yet I shall not be sorry if, as an accidental by-product, the enquiry helps to counteract the legend that Science is a purely rational pursuit, that the Scientist is a more "level-headed" and "dispassionate" type than others (and should therefore be given a leading part in world affairs); or that he is able to provide for himself and his contemporaries, a more rational substitute for ethical insights derived from other sources.

It was my ambition to make a difficult subject accessible to the general reader, but students familiar with it will, I hope, nevertheless find some new information in these pages. This refers mainly to Johannes Kepler, whose works, diaries, and correspondence have so far not been accessible to the English reader; nor does a serious English biography exist. Yet Kepler is one of the few geniuses who enables one to follow, step by step, the tortuous path that led him to his discoveries, and to get a really intimate glimpse, as in a slow-motion film, of the creative act.

The Young Genius

JOHANNES KEPLER, Keppler, Khepler, Kheppler, or Keplerus was conceived on May 16th, A.D. 1571, at 4.37 a.m., and was born on December 27th at 2.30 p.m., after a pregnancy lasting 224 days, 9 hours, and 53 minutes. The five different ways of spelling his name are all his own, and so are the figures relating to conception, pregnancy, and birth, recorded in a horoscope which he cast for himself. The contrast between his carelessness about his name and his extreme precision about dates reflects, from the very outset, a mind to whom all ultimate reality, the essence of religion, of truth and beauty, was contained in the language of numbers.

He was born in the township of Weil in wine-happy Swabia, a blessed corner of south-west Germany between the Black Forest, the Neckar, and the Rhine. Weil-der-Stadt—a freak name, meaning Weil-the-Town, but with the masculine "der" instead of the feminine "die"—has beautifully succeeded in preserving its mediæval character to our day.* It stretches along the top of a mound, long and narrow like the hull of a battleship, surrounded by massive, crenelated, ochre-coloured walls, and slender watch-towers topped by spire and weathercock. The gabled houses, with their irregular patterns of small, square windows, are covered with scarab green, topaz blue, and lemon yellow stucco on their cockeyed façades; where the stucco peels, the mud and lath peep through like weathered skin showing through a hole in a peasant's shirt. If, after fruitless knocking, you push open the door of a house, you are liable to be greeted by a calf or a goat, for the ground-floors of some old houses still serve as stables, with an inner staircase leading up to the family's living quarters. The warm smell of compost floats everywhere in the cobbled streets, but they are kept scrupulously, teutonically clean. The people speak a broad Swabian dialect and frequently address even the stranger with "thou"; the old family names, down from the mayor, Herr Oberdorfer, to the watchmaker, Herr Speidel, are the same which appear on documents from Kepler's time, when Weil had only two hundred citizens. Though it produced some other distinguished

* At least, to be precise, to the days of May 1955, when I visited Kepler's birthplace.

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men—among them the phrenologist Gall, who traced each faculty of the mind to a bump on the skull—Johannes Kepler is the town's hero, venerated like a patron saint.

One of the entries, dated 1554, in the municipal ledger, refers to the lease of a cabbage patch to Johannes' father, Sebaldus Kepler:

> Daniel Datter and Sebald Kepler, furrier, shall pay seventeen pennies at Martinmas out of their cabbage patch on the Klingelbrunner Lane between the fields of Joerg Rechten and those of Hans Rieger's children. Should they relinquish the cabbage patch, they shall cart six cartloads of manure into or onto it.

From this bucolic prelude one would expect a happy childhood for the infant Johannes. It was a ghastly one.

Grandfather Sebaldus, the furrier with the cabbage patch, was said to stem from a noble family, and became mayor of Weil; but after him, the respectable Keplers went into decline. His offspring were mostly degenerates and psychopaths, who chose mates of the same ilk. Johannes Kepler's father was a mercenary adventurer who narrowly escaped the gallows. His mother, Katherine, an innkeeper's daughter, was brought up by an aunt who was burnt alive as a witch, and Katherine herself, accused in old age of consorting with the Devil, had as narrow an escape from the stake as the father had from the gallows.

Grandfather Sebaldus' house (burnt down in 1648 but rebuilt later in the same style) stood on a corner of the market-place. Facing the house is a beautiful Renaissance fountain with four long, fluted copper spouts which issue from four human faces carved into the stone. Three of the faces are stylised masks; the fourth, turned towards the Town Hall and the Kepler house, looks like the realistic portrait of a bloated, coarse-featured man. There is a tradition in Weil according to which it is the likeness of old Sebaldus, the mayor. This may or may not be so, but it tallies with Kepler's own description of him:

> My grandfather Sebald, mayor of the imperial city of Weil, born in the year 1521 about St. James's day . . . is now 75 years of age. . . . He is remarkably arrogant and proudly dressed . . . short-tempered and obstinate, and his face betrays his licentious past. It is a red and fleshy face, and his beard gives it much authority. He was eloquent, at least as far as an ignorant man can be. From the year 1578 onward his reputation began to decline, together with his substance. . . .

This thumbnail sketch, and the others which follow, are part of a kind of genealogical horoscope, embracing all members of his family (including himself) which Kepler drew up when he was twenty-six. It is not only a remarkable document, but also a precious contribution to the study of the hereditary background of genius, for it happens only rarely that the historian has such ample material at his disposal.

When Grandfather Sebald was twenty-nine, he married Katherine Mueller from the nearby village of Marbach. Kepler described her as

> restless, clever and lying, but devoted to religion; slim and of a fiery nature; vivacious, an inveterate troublemaker; jealous, extreme in her hatreds, violent, a bearer of grudges. . . . And all her children have something of this. . . .

He also accuses his grandmother of pretending that she married at eighteen, when she was really twenty-two. However that may be, she bore Sebaldus twelve children in twenty-one years. The first three, named Sebaldus, Johan, and Sebaldus, all died in infancy. The fourth was Kepler's father, Heinrich, whom we leave aside for a moment. Of numbers 5 to 9 among his aunts and uncles, Kepler records:

> 5. Kunigund, born 1549, 23 May. The moon could not have been worse placed. She is dead, the mother of many children, poisoned they think, in the year 1581, 17 July. [Added later on]: Otherwise she was pious and wise.
>
> 6. Katherine, born 1551, 30 July. She too is dead.
>
> 7. Sebaldus, born 1552, 13 November. An astrologer and a Jesuit, he underwent the first and second ordinations for the priesthood; though a Catholic, he imitated the Lutherans and led a most impure life. Died in the end of dropsy after many earlier illnesses. Acquired a wife who was rich and nobly born, but one of many children. Contracted the French sickness. Was vicious and disliked by his fellow townsmen. In 1576, 16 August, he left Weil for Speyr where he arrived on the 18th; on the 22 December he left Speyr against the will of his superior and wandered in extreme poverty through France and Italy. [Added later on]: He was held to be kind and a good friend.
>
> 8. Katherine, born 1554, 5 August. She was intelligent and skilful, but married most unfortunately, lived sumptuously, squandered her goods, now a beggar. Died in 1619 or 1620.
>
> 9. Maria, born 1556, 25 August. She too is dead.

Of Nos. 10 and 11, he has nothing to say; No. 12, the last born of his uncles and aunts, also died in infancy.*

* *Cf.* Kretschmer: "One is tempted to say: genius arises in the hereditary process particularly at that point where a highly gifted family begins to degenerate. . . . This degeneration often announces itself in the generation to which the genius belongs, or even in the preceding one, and generally in the form of psychopathic and psychotic conditions" (*The Psychology of Men of Genius*).

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All this mis-shapen progeniture—except those who died in their cots—lived with old choleric Sebaldus and his shrewish wife, crowded into the narrow Kepler house, which, in fact, was rather a cottage. Kepler's father, Heinrich, though the fourth child, was the oldest among those who survived, and thus inherited the house, producing seven children in his turn. Kepler describes him thus:

> 4. Heinrich, my father, born 1547, 19 January. . . . A man vicious, inflexible, quarrelsome and doomed to a bad end. Venus and Mars increased his malice. Jupiter combust in descension made him a pauper but gave him a rich wife. Saturn in VII made him study gunnery; many enemies, a quarrelsome marriage . . . a vain love of honours, and vain hopes about them; a wanderer. . . . 1577: he ran the risk of hanging. He sold his house and started a tavern. 1578: a hard jar of gunpowder burst and lacerated my father's face. . . . 1589: treated my mother extremely ill, went finally into exile and died."

There is not even the usual mitigating addendum at the end. The story behind the entries is briefly this:

Heinrich Kepler married at the age of twenty-four. He seems to have studied no trade or craft, except "gunnery," which refers to his later military adventures. Seven months and two weeks after his marriage to Katherine Guldenmann, Johannes Kepler was born. Three years later, after the birth of his second son, Heinrich took the Emperor's shilling and went off to fight the Protestant insurgents in the Netherlands—an act the more ignominious as the Keplers were among the oldest Protestant families in Weil. The next year, Katherine joined her husband, leaving her children in the care of the grandparents. The year after they both returned, but not to Weil, where they were disgraced; instead, Heinrich bought a house in nearby Leonberg; but in a short time left again for Holland, to join the mercenary hordes of the Duke of Alba. It was apparently on this journey that he "ran the risk of hanging" for some unrecorded crime. He returned once more, sold the house in Leonberg, ran a tavern in Ellmendingen, went again back to Leonberg, and in 1588 vanished forever from the sight of his family. Rumour has it that he enlisted in the Neapolitan fleet.

His wife Katherine, the innkeeper's daughter, was an equally unstable character. In the family horoscope, Kepler describes her as: "small, thin, swarthy, gossiping and quarrelsome, of a bad disposition." There was not much to choose between the two Katherines, the mother and the grandmother; and yet the mother was the more frightening of the two, with an aura of magic and witchcraft about her. She collected herbs and concocted potions in whose powers she believed; I have already mentioned that the aunt who brought her up had ended her days at the stake, and that Katherine nearly shared the same fate, as we shall hear.

To complete the survey of this idyllic family, I must mention our Johannes' brothers and sisters. There were six of them; of whom three again died in childhood, and two became normal, law-abiding citizens (Gretchen, who married a vicar, and Christopher, who became a pewterer). But Heinrich, the next in age to Johannes, was an epileptic and a victim of the psychopathic streak running through the family. An exasperating problem child, his youth seems to have been a long succession of beatings, misadventures, and illnesses. He was bitten by animals, nearly drowned, and nearly burnt alive. He was apprenticed to a draper, then a baker, and finally ran away from home when his loving father threatened to sell him. In subsequent years, he was a camp follower with the Hungarian army in the Turkish wars, a street singer, baker, nobleman's valet, beggar, regimental drummer, and halberdier. Throughout this chequered career, he remained the hapless victim of one misadventure after another—always ill, sacked from every job, robbed by thieves, beaten up by highwaymen—until he finally gave up, begged his way home to his mother, and hung to her apron strings until he died at forty-two. In his childhood and youth, Johannes conspicuously shared some of his younger brother's attributes, particularly his grotesque accident-proneness, and constant ill-health combined with hypochondria.

JOHANNES was a sickly child, with thin limbs and a large, pasty face surrounded by dark curly hair. He was born with defective eyesight—myopia plus anocular polyopy (multiple vision). His stomach and gall bladder gave constant trouble; he suffered from boils, rashes, and probably from piles, for he tells us that he could never sit still for any length of time and had to walk up and down.

The gabled house on the market-place in Weil, with its crooked beams and dolls-house windows, must have been bedlam. The bullying of red-faced old Sebaldus; the high-pitched quarrels of mother Katherine and grandmother Katherine; the brutality of the weak-headed, swashbuckling father; the epileptic fits of brother Heinrich; the dozen or more of seedy uncles and aunts, parents and grandparents, all crowded together in that unhappy little house.

Johannes was four years old when his mother followed her husband to the wars; five, when the parents returned and the family began its restless wanderings to Leonberg, Ellmendingen, and back to Leonberg. He could attend school

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only irregularly, and from his ninth to his eleventh year did not go to school at all but was "put to hard work in the country." As a result, and in spite of his precocious brilliance, it took him twice as long as it took normal children to complete the three classes of the elementary Latin school. At thirteen, he was at last able to enter the lower theological seminary at Adelberg.

The notes on his own childhood and youth, in the family horoscope, read like the diary of Job:

> On the birth of Johann Kepler. I have investigated the matter of my conception, which took place in the year 1571, May 16, at 4.37 a.m.... My weakness at birth removes the suspicion that my mother was already pregnant at the marriage, which was the 15th of May.... Thus I was born premature, at thirty-two weeks, after 224 days, ten hours.... 1575 [aged four] I almost died of small pox, was in very ill health, and my hands were badly crippled.... 1577 [aged six]. On my birthday I lost a tooth, breaking it off with a string which I pulled with my hands.... 1585–86 [fourteen–fifteen]. During these two years, I suffered continually from skin ailments, often severe sores, often from the scabs of chronic putrid wounds in my feet which healed badly and kept breaking out again. On the middle finger of my right hand I had a worm, on the left a huge sore.... 1587 [sixteen]. On April 4 I was attacked by a fever.... 1589 [nineteen]. I began to suffer terribly from headaches and a disturbance of my limbs. The mange took hold of me.... Then there was a dry disease.... 1591 [twenty]. The cold brought on prolonged mange.... A disturbance of body and mind had set in because of the excitement of the Carnival play in which I was playing Mariamne.... 1592 [twenty-one]. I went down to Weil and lost a quarter florin at gambling.... At Cupinga's I was offered union with a virgin; on New Year's Eve I achieved this with the greatest possible difficulty, experiencing the most acute pains of the bladder....

Only two brief memories mitigate the gloom and squalor of this childhood. At the age of six:

> I heard much of the comet of that year, 1577, and was taken by my mother to a high place to look at it.

And at the age of nine:

> I was called outdoors by my parents especially, to look at the eclipse of the moon. It appeared quite red.

So much for the sunny side of life.

No doubt, some of his miseries and ailments existed only in his imagination; while others—all these cold sores, worms on the finger, scabs and manges—seem like the stigmata of his self-detestation, physical projections of the image he had formed of himself: the portrait of a child as a mangy dog. He meant this literally, as we shall see.

Orphic Purge

THERE are always compensations. In Kepler's case, the compensations offered by destiny were the exceptional educational facilities in his native land.

The Dukes of Wuerttemberg, after embracing the Lutheran creed, had created a modern educational system. They needed erudite clergymen who could hold their own in the religious controversy that was raging across the country, and they needed an efficient administrative service. The Protestant universities in Wittenberg and Tuebingen were the intellectual arsenals of the new creed; the confiscated monasteries and convents provided ideal accommodation for a network of elementary and secondary schools, which fed the universities and chancelleries with bright young men. A system of scholarships and grants for "the children of the poor and faithful who are of a diligent, Christian, and god-fearing disposition" vouchsafed an efficient selection of candidates. In this respect, Wuerttemberg before the Thirty Years' War was a modern welfare state in miniature. Kepler's parents would certainly not have bothered about his education; the precocious brilliance of the child automatically guaranteed his progress from school to seminary and from there to university, as on a moving belt.

The curriculum at the seminary was in Latin, and the pupils were rigorously held to use only Latin even among themselves. In the elementary school already, they were made to read the comedies of Plautus and Terence, to add colloquial fluency to scholarly precision. The German vernacular, though it had acquired a new dignity through Luther's Bible translation, was not yet considered a worthy medium of expression for scholars. As a happy result of this, Kepler's style, in the pamphlets and letters which he wrote in German, has an enchantingly naïve and earthy quality which, in contrast to the dehydrated mediæval Latin, sounds like the joyous din of a country fair after the austerities of the lecture-room. Canon Copernicus' German was modelled on the stilted and devious "Chancellery Style" of the bureaucracy; Kepler's German seems modelled on Luther's pronouncement: "One should not imitate those asses who ask the Latin language how German should be spoken; but should ask the mother in her home, the children in the gutters, the common man at the fair, and watch their big mouths as they speak, and do accordingly."

When he had passed the Elementary Latin school, Johannes' good brains, bad health, and interest in religion made the career of a clergyman the obvious choice. The theological seminary which he attended from his thirteenth to

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his seventeenth year, was divided into a lower (Adelberg) and a higher (Maulbronn) course. The curriculum was broad and rounded, adding Greek to Latin and embracing, besides theology, the study of the pagan classics, rhetorics and dialectics, mathematics and music. Discipline was strict: classes started in summer at four, in winter at five o'clock in the morning; the seminarists had to wear a sleeveless, shapeless cloak reaching below their knees, and were hardly ever allowed out on leave. Young Kepler recorded two of his most daring and paradoxical utterances from his seminarist days: that the study of philosophy was a symptom of Germany's decline; and that the French language was worthier of study than the Greek. No wonder his fellows regarded him as an intolerable egghead and beat him up at every opportunity.

He was, indeed, as unpopular among his schoolmates as he was beloved by his friends in later years. In his horoscope record, the entries relating his physical afflictions alternate with others which reveal his moral misery and loneliness.

The narrative of the horoscope was continued in the same year (his twenty-sixth) in another remarkable document, a self-analysis more unsparing than Rousseau's. Written in the year when his first book was published, when he had undergone a kind of orphic purge and found his final vocation, it is perhaps the most introspective piece of writing of the Renaissance. Kepler put down, with acid amusement, this portrait of himself—where the past tense alternates with the present:

> That man [*i.e.*, Kepler] has in every way a dog-like nature. His appearance is that of a little lap-dog. (1) His body is agile, wiry and well-proportioned. Even his appetites were alike: he liked gnawing bones and dry crusts of bread, and was so greedy that whatever his eyes chanced on he grabbed; yet, like a dog, he drinks little and is content with the simplest food. (2) His habits were similar. He continually sought the goodwill of others, was dependent on others for everything, ministered to their wishes, never got angry when they reproved him and was anxious to get back into their favour. He was constantly on the move, ferreting among the sciences, politics and private affairs, including the lowest kind; always following someone else, and imitating his thoughts and actions. He is bored with conversation, but greets visitors just like a little dog; yet when the last thing is snatched away from him, he flares up and growls. He tenaciously persecutes wrong-doers—that is, he barks at them. He is malicious and bites people with his sarcasms. He hates many people exceedingly and they avoid him, but his masters are fond of him. He has a dog-like horror of baths, tinctures and lotions. His recklessness knows no limits, which is surely due to Mars in quadrature with Mercury, and in trine with the moon; yet he takes good care of his life.... [He has] a vast appetite for the greatest things. His teachers praised him for his good dispositions, though morally he was the worst among his contemporaries.... He was religious to the point of superstition. As a boy of ten years when he first read Holy Scripture... he grieved that on account of the impurity of his life, the honour to be a prophet was denied him. When he committed a wrong, he performed an expiatory rite, hoping it would save him from punishment: this consisted in reciting his faults in public....
>
> In this man there are two opposite tendencies: always to regret any wasted time, and always to waste it willingly. For Mercury makes one inclined to amusements, games, and other light pleasures.... Since his caution with money kept him away from play, he often played by himself. [The word for "play," *lusu*, may refer here either to gambling or to sex.] It must be noted that his miserliness did not aim at acquiring riches, but at removing his fear of poverty—although, perhaps, avarice results from an excess of this fear....

Kepler wrote this at the age of twenty-six. It would be a harsh self-portrait even for a modern young man, reared in the age of psychiatry, anxiety, masochism, and the rest; coming from a young German at the close of the 16th century, the product of a coarse, brutal, and callow civilisation, it is an astonishing document. It shows the ruthless intellectual honesty of a man whose childhood was spent in hell and who had fought his way out of it.

With all its rambling inconsequences, its baroque mixture of sophistication and naïvety, it unfolds the timeless case-history of the neurotic child from a problem-family, covered with scabs and boils, who feels that whatever he does is a pain to others and a disgrace to himself. How familiar it all is: the bragging, defiant, aggressive pose to hide one's terrible vulnerability; the lack of self-assurance, the dependence on others, the desperate need for approval, leading to an embarrassing mixture of servility and arrogance; the pathetic eagerness for play, for an escape from the loneliness which he carries with him like a portable cage; the vicious circle of accusations and self-accusations; the exaggerated standards applied to one's own moral conduct which turns life into a long series of Falls into the ninefold inferno of guilt.

Kepler belonged to the race of bleeders, the victims of emotional haemophilia, to whom every injury means multiplied danger, and who nevertheless must go on exposing himself to stabs and slashes. But one customary feature is conspicuously absent from his writings: the soothing drug of self-pity, which makes the sufferer spiritually impotent, and prevents his suffering from bearing fruit. He was a Job who shamed his Lord by making trees grow from

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his boils. He had that mysterious knack of transforming his torments into creative achievement, as a turbine extracts electric current out of the turbulent stream. His eye-deficiency seems the most perfidious trick that fate could inflict on a star-gazer; but how is one to decide whether an inborn affliction will paralyse or galvanise? The myopic child, who sometimes saw the world doubled or quadrupled, became the founder of modern optics (the word "dioptrics" on the oculist's prescription is derived from the title of one of Kepler's books); the man who could only see clearly at a short distance, invented the modern astronomical telescope; at work here was a magic dynamo, which transforms pain into achievement and curses into blessings.

Mathematicus

He graduated from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Tuebingen at the age of twenty. Then, continuing on the road to his chosen vocation, he matriculated at the Theological Faculty. He studied there for nearly four years, but before he could pass his final examinations, fate intervened. The candidate of divinity was unexpectedly offered the post of a teacher of mathematics and astronomy in Gratz, capital of the Austrian province of Styria.

Styria was a country ruled by a Catholic Hapsburg prince, and its predominantly Protestant Estates. Gratz accordingly had both a Catholic university and a Protestant school. When, in 1593, the mathematicus of the latter died, the Governors asked, as they often did, the Protestant university of Tuebingen to recommend a candidate. The Tuebingen senate recommended Kepler. Perhaps they wanted to get rid of the querulous young man, who had professed Calvinist views and defended Copernicus in a public disputation. He would make a bad priest but a good teacher of mathematics.

Kepler was taken by surprise and at first inclined to refuse—"not because I was afraid of the great distance of the place (a fear which I condemn in others) but because of the unexpected and lowly nature of the position, and my scant knowledge in this branch of philosophy." He had never thought of becoming an astronomer. His early interest in Copernicus had been one among many others; it had been aroused, not by an interest in astronomy proper, but by the mystical implications of the sun-centred universe.

Nevertheless, after some hesitations he accepted the offer—mainly, it seems, because it meant financial independence, and because of his inborn love of adventure. He made it a condition, however, that he should be allowed to resume his study of divinity at a later date—which he never did.

The new teacher of astronomy and "Mathematicus of the Province"—a title that went with it—arrived in Gratz in April 1594, at the age of twenty-three. A year later he hit on the idea which would dominate the rest of his life, and out of which his revolutionary discoveries were born.

So much about young Kepler's emotional life. As to his intellectual development, here again, we have his self-portrait to guide us:

> This man was born destined to spend much time on difficult tasks from which others shrunk. As a boy he precociously attempted the science of versifying. He tried to write comedies and chose the longest poems to learn by heart.... His efforts were at first devoted to acrostics and anagrams. Later on he set about various most difficult forms of lyric poetry, wrote a pindaric lay, dithyrambic poems and compositions on unusual subjects, such as the resting-place of the sun, the sources of rivers, the sight of Atlantis through the clouds. He was fond of riddles and subtle witticisms and made much play with allegories which he worked out to the most minute detail, dragging in far-fetched comparisons. He liked to compose paradoxes and... loved mathematics above all other studies.
>
> In philosophy he read the texts of Aristotle in the original.... In theology he started at once on predestination and fell in with the Lutheran view of the absence of free will.... But later on he opposed it.... Inspired by his view of divine mercy, he did not believe that any nation was destined to damnation.... He explored various fields of mathematics as if he were the first man to do so, [and made a number of discoveries] which later on he found to have already been discovered. He argued with men of every profession for the profit of his mind. He jealously preserved all his writings and kept any book he could lay hands on with the idea that they might be useful at some time in the future....

In his Horoscope he further reports that during his first year at the University he wrote essays on "the heavens, the spirits, the Genii, the elements, the nature of fire, the tides, the shape of the continents, and other things of the same kind."

The last remark about his student days reads:

> At Tuebingen I often defended the opinions of Copernicus in the disputation of the candidates, and I composed a careful disputation on the first motion, which consists in the rotation of the earth; then I was adding to this the motion of the earth around the sun for physical, or if you prefer, metaphysical reasons.
>
> If there are living creatures on the moon (a matter about which I took pleasure in speculating after the manner of Pythagoras and Plutarch in a

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disputation written in Tuebingen in 1593), it is to be assumed that they should be adapted to the character of their particular country.

None of this points as yet in any definite direction. Indeed, his main complaint against himself, which he repeats over and over again, is his "inconsistency, thoughtlessness, lack of discipline, and rashness"; his "lack of persistence in his undertakings, caused by the quickness of his spirit"; his "beginning many new tasks before the previous one is finished"; his "sudden enthusiasms which do not last, for, however industrious he may be, nevertheless he is a bitter hater of work"; his "failure to finish things he has begun."

Again we see that magic dynamo of the psyche at work. The streak of irresponsibility, and restlessness in the blood, which turned his father, brother, and uncles into vagabonds who could never settle down in any place or profession, drove Kepler into his unorthodox, often crankish intellectual enterprises, made him into the most reckless and erratic spiritual adventurer of the Scientific Revolution.

The lectures of this new teacher must have been quite an experience. He thought himself a poor pedagogue because, as he explains in the self-analysis, whenever he got excited—which was most of the time—he "burst into speech without having time to weigh whether he was saying the right thing." His "enthusiasm and eagerness is harmful, and an obstacle to him," because it continually leads him into digressions, because he always thinks of "new words and new subjects, new ways of expressing or proving his point, or even of altering the plan of his lecture or holding back what he intended to say." The fault, he explains, lies in his peculiar kind of memory which makes him promptly forget everything he is not interested in, but which is quite wonderful in relating one idea to another. "This is the cause of the many parentheses in his lectures when everything occurs to him at once and, because of the turmoil of all these images of thought in his memory, he must pour them out in his speech. On these grounds his lectures are tiring, or at any rate perplexing and not very intelligible."

Astrology

One onerous duty, which he secretly enjoyed, during his four years in Gratz, was the publication of an annual calendar of astrological forecasts. This was a traditional obligation imposed on the official mathematicus in Styria and brought an additional remuneration of twenty florins per calendar—which Kepler direly needed at his miserable salary of a hundred and fifty florins *per annum*.

With his first calendar, Kepler was decidedly lucky. He had prophesied, among other things, a cold spell and an invasion by the Turks. Six months later he reported smugly to Michael Maestlin:

> By the way, so far the calendar's predictions are proving correct. There is an unheard-of cold in our land. In the Alpine farms people die of the cold. It is reliably reported that when they arrive home and blow their noses, the noses fall off.... As for the Turks, on January 1 they devastated the whole country from Vienna to Neustadt, setting everything on fire and carrying off men and plunder.

The successful prophecies of the first calendar contributed more to the popularity of the new mathematicus than his enthusiastic and garbled lectures before an empty classroom. As always in times of crisis, belief in astrology was again on the increase in the 16th century, not only among the ignorant, but among eminent scholars. It played an important, and at times a dominant part in Kepler's life. His attitude to it was typical of the contradictions in his character, and of an age of transition.

He started his career with the publication of astrological calendars, and ended it as Court Astrologer to the Duke of Wallenstein. He did it for a living, with his tongue in his cheek, called astrology "the step-daughter of astronomy," popular prophecies "a dreadful superstition" and "a sortilegous monkey-play." In a typical outburst he wrote: "A mind accustomed to mathematical deduction, when confronted with the faulty foundations [of astrology] resists a long, long time, like an obstinate mule, until compelled by beating and curses to put its foot into that dirty puddle."

But while he despised these crude practices, and despised himself for having to resort to them, he at the same time believed in the possibility of a new and true astrology as an exact empirical science. He wrote a number of serious treatises on astrology as he would understand it, and the subject constantly intrudes even in his classic scientific works. One of these treatises carries, as a motto, "a warning to certain Theologians, Physicians, and Philosophers... that, while justly rejecting the stargazers' superstitions, they should not throw out the child with the bathwater." For "nothing exists nor happens in the visible sky that is not sensed in some hidden manner by the faculties of Earth and Nature: [so that] these faculties of the spirit here on earth are as much affected as the sky itself." And again: "That the sky does something to man is obvious enough; but what it does specifically remains hidden." In other words, Kepler regarded the current astrological practices as quackery, but only to the extent to

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which a modern physician distrusts an unproven slimming diet, without doubting for a moment the influence of diet on health and figure. "The belief in the effect of the constellations derives in the first place from experience, which is so convincing that it can be denied only by people who have not examined it."

In his self-analysis, in spite of its astoundingly modern introspective passages, all conspicuous character-attributes were derived from the planetary constellations. But on reflection, what other explanation was there available at the time? To a questing mind without an inkling of the processes by which heredity and environment shape a man's character, astrology, in one form or another, was the obvious means of relating the individual to the universal whole, by making him reflect the all-embracing constellation of the world, by establishing an intimate sympathy and correspondence between microcosmos and macrocosmos: "The natural soul of man is not larger in size than a single point, and on this point the form and character of the entire sky is potentially engraved, even if it were a hundred times larger." Unless predestination alone were to account for everything, making further enquiry into the Book of Nature pointless, it was only logical to assume that man's condition and fate were determined by the same celestial motions which determine the weather and the seasons, the quality of the harvest, the fertility of animal and plant. In a word, astrological determinism, to a scientific mind like Kepler's, was the forerunner of biological and psychological determinism.

Already as a child he was fascinated by the problem why he had become what he had become. There is the passage in his self-analysis: "In theology I started at once on predestination and fell into the Lutheran view of the absence of freewill." But he quickly repudiated it. When he was thirteen, "I wrote to Tuebingen asking that a certain theological treatise be sent to me, and one of my comrades upbraided me thus: 'Bachelor, does't thou too suffer from doubts about predestination?'" The mystery of "why am I what I am?" must have been experienced with particular intensity by a precocious and unhappy adolescent in that century of awakening, when individual consciousness was emerging from the collective consciousness of the mediæval beehive-hierarchy, where queens and warriors, workers and drones, had all inhabited their ordained cubby-holes in existence. But if there was no pre-destination, how was one to explain the differences in character and personality, talent and worth, between members of the same race, all descended from Adam; or between young Johannes himself, the infant prodigy, and his epileptic brother? Modern man has an explanation of sorts in terms of chromosomes and genes, adaptive responses and traumatic experiences; 16th-century man could only look for an explanation to the state of the universe as a whole at the moment of his conception or birth, as expressed by the constellation of earth, planets, and stars.

The difficulty was to find out how exactly this influence worked. That "the sky does something to man" was self-evident; but specifically what? "Truly in all my knowledge of astrology I know not enough with certainty that I should dare to predict with confidence any specific thing." Yet he never gave up hope:

> No man should hold it to be incredible/that out of the astrologers' foolishness and blasphemies/ some useful and sacred knowledge may come/that out of the unclean slime/may come a little snail/ or mussel/or oyster or eel, all useful nourishments;/that out of a big heap of lowly worms/ may come a silk worm/and lastly/that in the evil-smelling dung/a busy hen may find a decent corn/nay, a pearl or a golden corn/if she but searches and scratches long enough.

There is hardly a page in Kepler's writings—some twenty solid volumes in folio—that is not alive and kicking.

And gradually, a vision did indeed emerge out of the confusion. At twenty-four, he wrote to a correspondent:

> In what manner does the countenance of the sky at the moment of a man's birth determine his character? It acts on the person during his life in the manner of the loops which a peasant ties at random around the pumpkins in his field: they do not cause the pumpkin to grow, but they determine its shape. The same applies to the sky: it does not endow man with his habits, history, happiness, children, riches or a wife, but it moulds his condition. . . .

Thus only the pattern is cosmically determined, not any particular event; within that pattern, man is free. In his later years, this *Gestalt* concept of cosmic destiny became more abstract and purified from dross. The individual soul, which bears the potential imprint of the entire sky, reacts to the light coming from the planets according to the angles they form with each other, and the geometrical harmonies or disharmonies that result—just as the ear reacts to the mathematical harmonies of music, and the eye to the harmonies of colour. This capacity of the soul to act as a cosmic resonator has a mystic and causal aspect: on the one hand it affirms the soul's affinity with the *anima mundi*, on the other, it makes it subject to strictly mathematical laws. At this point, Kepler's particular brand of astrology merges into his all-embracing Pythagorean vision of the Harmony of the Spheres.

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The Cosmic Mystery

FROM the frustrations of his first year in Gratz, Kepler escaped into the cosmological speculations which he had playfully pursued in his Tuebingen days. But now these speculations were becoming both more intense, and more mathematical in character. A year after his arrival—more precisely on July 9th, 1595, for he has carefully recorded the date—he was drawing a figure on the blackboard for his class, when an idea suddenly struck him with such force that he felt he was holding the key to the secret of creation in his hand. "The delight that I took in my discovery," he wrote later, "I shall never be able to describe in words." It determined the course of his life, and remained his main inspiration throughout it.

The idea was, that the universe is built around certain geometrical shapes which form its invisible skeleton, as it were. The idea itself was completely wrong; yet it led eventually to Kepler's Laws, the demolition of the antique universe on wheels, and the birth of modern cosmology. The pseudo-discovery which started it all is expounded in Kepler's first book, the *Mysterium Cosmographicum*,* which he published at the age of twenty-five.

In the Preface to the work, Kepler explained how he came to make his "discovery." While still a student in Tuebingen, he had heard from his teacher in astronomy, Maestlin, about Copernicus, and agreed that the sun must be in the centre of the universe "for physical, or if you prefer, for metaphysical reasons." He then began to wonder why there existed just six planets "instead of twenty or a hundred," and why they were spaced out as they were. He tried various methods to find some mathematical relation between the sizes of the planetary orbits, but got nowhere. Then he hit on his magic idea: instead of trying to establish *numerical* relations, he tried to establish a *geometrical* relation by inscribing a series of basic geometrical figures into the spaces between successive orbits. He found what he was looking for in the series of so-called "perfect solids"—the tetrahedron (pyramid), cube, octahedron, dodecahedron, and icosahedron (Fig. 1).

They were also called the "Pythagorean" or "Platonic" solids. Being perfectly symmetrical, each can be *inscribed* into a sphere, so that all of its vertices (corners) lie on the surface of the sphere. Similarly, each one can be *circumscribed* round a sphere, so that the sphere touches every face in its centre. It is a curious fact, inherent in the nature of three-dimensional space, that (as Euclid proved) the number of regular solids is limited to these five forms. Whatever shape you choose as a face, no other perfectly symmetrical solid can be constructed except these five. Other combinations just cannot be fitted together.

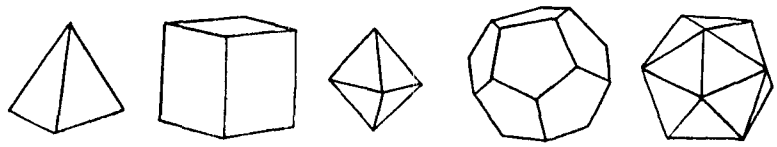

Fig. 1.

So there existed only five perfect solids—and five intervals between the planets! It was impossible to believe that this should be by chance, and not by divine arrangement. It provided the complete answer to the question why there were just six planets "and not twenty or a hundred." And it also answered the question why the distances between the orbits were as they were. They had to be spaced in such a manner that the five solids could be exactly fitted into the intervals, as an invisible skeleton or frame. And lo, they fitted! Or at least, they seemed to fit, more or less. Eureka! The mystery of the universe was solved by young Kepler, teacher at the Protestant school in Gratz. Its model looked like Fig. 2.

> "It is amazing!" Kepler informs his readers, "although I had as yet no clear idea of the order in which the perfect solids had to be arranged, I nevertheless succeeded.... Day and night I spent with calculations to see whether the proposition that I had formulated tallied with the Copernican orbits or whether my joy would be carried away by the winds.... Within a few days everything fell into its place. I saw one symmetrical solid after the other fit in so precisely between the appropriate orbits... that if a peasant were to ask you on what kind of hook the heavens are fastened so that they don't fall down, it will be easy for thee to answer him. Farewell!"

This is one of the rare recorded instances of a false inspiration, a supreme hoax of the

* The full title reads: *A Forerunner (Prodromus) to Cosmographical Treatises, containing the Cosmic Mystery of the admirable proportions between the Heavenly Orbits and the true and proper reasons for their Numbers, Magnitudes and Periodic Motions*, by Johannes Kepler, Mathematicus of the Illustrious Estates of Styria, Tuebingen, *anno* 1596.

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Socratic *daimon*, the inner voice that speaks with such infallible, intuitive certainty to the deluded mind. That unforgettable moment before the figures on the blackboard carried the same inner conviction as Archimedes' *Eureka* or Newton's flash of insight about the falling apple. But there are few instances where a delusion led to momentous and true scientific discoveries and yielded new laws of Nature. This is the ultimate fascination of Kepler—both as an individual and as a case history. For Kepler's misguided belief in the five perfect bodies was not a passing fancy, but remained with him, in a modified version, to the end of his life, showing all the symptoms of a paranoid delusion; and yet it functioned as the *vigor motrix*, the spur of his immortal achievements. He wrote the *Mysterium Cosmographicum* when he was twenty-five, but he published a second edition of it a quarter-century later, towards the end, when he had done his life work, discovered his three laws, destroyed the Ptolemaic universe, and laid the foundations of modern cosmology. The dedication to this second edition, written at the age of fifty, betrays the persistence of the *idée fixe*:

> Nearly twenty-five years have passed since I published the present little book.... Although I was then still quite young and this publication my first work on astronomy, nevertheless its success in the following years proclaims with a loud voice that never before has anybody published a more significant, happier, and in view of its subject, worthier first-book. It would be mistaken to regard it as a pure invention of my mind (far be any presumption from my intent, and any exaggerated admiration from the reader's, when we touch the seven-stringed harp of the Creator's wisdom). For as if a heavenly oracle had dictated it to me, the published booklet was in all its parts immediately recognised as excellent and true throughout (as it is the rule with obvious acts of God).

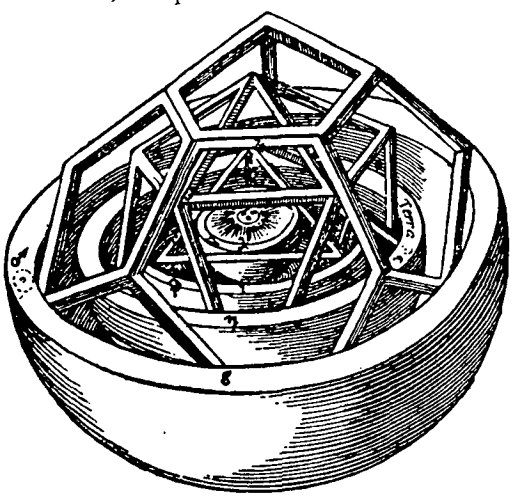

Fig. 2. Kepler's model of the Universe. Detail, showing the orbital spheres of Mars, Earth, Venus and Mercury with the Sun in the centre.

Now, Kepler's style is often exuberant and sometimes bombastic, but rarely to this extent. The apparent presumption is in fact the radiance of the *idée fixe*, an emanation of the immense emotive charge which such ideas carry. When the patient in a mental home declares that he is the mouthpiece of the Holy Ghost, he means it not as a boast but as a flat statement of fact.

Here we have, then, a young man of twenty-four, an aspirant of theology, with only a sketchy knowledge of astronomy, who hits upon a crank idea, convinced that he has solved the "cosmic mystery." "There is no great ingenuity," to quote Seneca, "without an admixture of dementedness," but as a rule that dementedness devours the ingenuity. Kepler's history will show how exceptions to this rule may occur.

Worthy of Wonder

KEPLER'S first book contains the seeds of his principal future discoveries. It starts with an enthusiastic and lucid profession of faith in Copernicus. It was the first unequivocal, public commitment by a professional astronomer which appeared in print fifty years after Canon Koppernigk's death, and the beginning of his posthumous triumph. Galileo, by six years Kepler's senior, and astronomers like Maestlin, were still either silent on Copernicus, or agreed with him only in cautious privacy.

The book falls into two parts, each written in a different mood and key. The first is mediæval, aprioristic, and mystical; the second modern and empirical. In the first part Kepler explains to us why there are three planets outside and two inside the earth's orbit; why that orbit is placed just where it is; why the cube lies between the two outermost planets and the octahedron between the two innermost; what affinities and sympathies exist between the various planets and the various solids, and so on—all this by *a priori* deductions derived straight from the Creator's secret thoughts, and supported by reasons so fantastic that one can hardly believe one is listening to one of the founders of modern science.

The opening paragraph of the second half must have come as a shock to his readers:

> What we have so far said served merely to support our thesis by arguments of probability. Now we shall proceed to the astronomical determination of the orbits and to geometrical considerations. If these do not confirm the thesis, then all our previous efforts have doubtless been in vain.

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So the divine inspiration and his *a priori* certitude were merely "probabilities"; and their truth or falsehood was to be decided by the observed facts. Without transition, in a single startling jump, we have traversed the watershed between metaphysical speculation and empirical science.

So far, Kepler had been concerned with finding reasons for the number and spatial distribution of the planets. Having satisfied himself (if not his readers) that the five solids provided all the answers, he now turned to a different, and more promising problem, which no astronomer before him had raised. He began to look for a mathematical relation between a planet's distance from the sun, and the length of its "year" —that is, the time it needed for a complete revolution.

These periods were, of course, known since antiquity with considerable precision. In round figures, Mercury needs three months to complete a revolution, Venus seven and a half months, the earth a year, Mars two years, Jupiter twelve years, and Saturn thirty years. But nobody before Kepler had asked the question *why* this should be so. Kepler's answer was, that there must be a *force emanating from the sun* which drives the planets round their orbits. The outer planets move slower because this driving force diminishes in ratio to distance "as does the force of light."

It would be difficult to overestimate the revolutionary significance of this proposal. For the first time since antiquity, an attempt was made not only to *describe* heavenly motions in geometrical terms, but to assign them a *physical cause*. We have arrived at the point where astronomy and physics meet again, after a divorce which had lasted for two thousand years. This reunion of the two halves of the split mind produced explosive results. It led to Kepler's three Laws, the pillars on which Newton built the modern universe.

Again we are in the fortunate position of being able to watch, as in a slow-motion film, how Kepler was led to taking that decisive step. In the key passage from the *Mysterium Cosmographicum* which follows, the index-numbers are Kepler's own, and refer to his Notes in the second edition:

> If we want to get closer to the truth and establish some correspondence in the proportions [between the distances and velocities of the planets] then we must choose between these two assumptions: either the souls[i] which move the planets are the less active the farther the planet is removed from the sun, or there exists only one moving soul[ii] in the centre of all the orbits, that is the sun, which drives the planet the more vigorously the closer the planet is, but whose force is quasi-exhausted when acting on the outer planets because of the long distance and the weakening of the force which it entails.

To this passage Kepler made, in the second edition, the following notes:

> (i) That such souls do not exist I have proved in my *Astronomia Nova*.
>
> (ii) If we substitute for the word "soul" the word "force" then we get just the principle which underlies my physics of the skies.... For once I firmly believed that the motive force of a planet was a soul.... Yet as I reflected that this cause of motion diminishes in proportion to distance, just as the light of the sun diminishes in proportion to distance from the sun, I came to the conclusion that this force must be something substantial—"substantial" not in the literal sense but... in the same manner as we say that light is something substantial, meaning by this a non-substantial entity emanating from a substantial body.

We are witnessing the hesitant emergence of the modern concepts of "forces" and "radiating energies" which are both material and non-material, and, generally speaking, as ambiguous and bewildering as the mystical concepts which they have come to replace. As we watch the working of the mind of Kepler (or Paracelsus, Gilbert, Descartes) we are made to realise the fallacy of the belief that at some point between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, man shook off the "superstitions of mediæval religion" like a puppy getting out of the water, and started on the bright new road of Science. Inside these minds, we find no abrupt break with the past, but a gradual transformation of the symbols of their cosmic experience—from *anima motrix* into *vis motrix*, moving spirit into moving force, mythological imagery into mathematical hieroglyphics—a transformation which never was, and, one hopes, never will be entirely completed.

The closing chapter of the *Mysterium* is a return to the mediæval shore of the Keplerian torrent of thought. It is described as "the dessert after this substantial meal," and concerns the constellations of the sky on the first and last days of the world. We are given a fairly promising horoscope for the Creation—which started on Sunday, April 27th, 4977 B.C.; but about the last day Kepler says modestly: "I did not find it possible to deduce an end of the motions from inherent reasons."

On this childish note ends Kepler's first book, the dream of five perfect solids determining the scheme of the universe. The history of thought knows many barren truths and fertile errors. Kepler's error turned out to be of immense fertility. "The direction of my whole life, of my studies and works, has been determined by this

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one little book," he wrote a quarter-century later. Yet he also had an inkling of the paradoxical nature of all this, for he added:

> The roads by which men arrive at their insights into celestial matters seem to me almost as worthy of wonder as those matters in themselves.

The Creative Obsession

WHAT exactly was it that so forcefully attracted Kepler, when he was still a student of theology, to the Copernican universe? In his self-analysis he expressly stated that it was not interest in astronomy proper, that he was converted "by physical, or if you prefer, metaphysical reasons"; and he repeats this statement almost verbatim in the preface to the *Mysterium*. These "physical or metaphysical reasons" he explains differently in different passages; but the gist of them is, that the sun must be in the centre of the world because he is the symbol of God the Father, the source of light and heat, the generator of the force which drives the planets in their orbits, and because a sun-centred universe is geometrically simpler and more satisfactory. These seem to be four different reasons, but they form a single, indivisible complex in Kepler's mind, a new Pythagorean synthesis of mysticism and science.

To the Pythagoreans and Plato, the animating force of the deity radiated from the centre of the world outward, until Aristotle banished the First Mover to the periphery of the universe. In the Copernican system, the sun again occupied the centre, but God remained outside, and the sun had neither divine attributes, nor any physical influence on the motions of the planets. In Kepler's universe, all mystic attributes and physical powers are centralised in the sun; the First Mover is returned to the focal position where he belongs. The visible universe is the symbol and "signature" of the Holy Trinity: the sun represents the Father, the sphere of the fixed stars the Son, the invisible forces which, emanating from the Father, act through interstellar space, represent the Holy Ghost:

> The sun in the middle of the moving stars, himself at rest and yet the source of motion, carries the image of God the Father and Creator. . . . He distributes his motive force through a medium which contains the moving bodies even as the Father creates through the Holy Ghost.

If Kepler's evolution had stopped here, he would have remained a crank. But I have already pointed out the contrast between the *a priori* deductions in the first part of the book and the modern scientific approach of the second. This co-existence of the mystical and the empirical, of wild flights of thought and dogged, painstaking research, remained the main characteristic of Kepler from his early youth to his old age. Other men living on the watershed displayed the same dualism, but in Kepler it was more pointed and paradoxical, carried to extremes verging on insanity. It accounts for the incredible mixture in his works of recklessness and pedantic caution, his naïvety and philosophical depth. It emboldened him to ask questions which nobody had dared to ask without trembling at their audacity, or blushing at their apparent foolishness. Some of them appear to the modern mind as meaningless. The others led to the reconciliation of earth-physics with sky-geometry, and were the beginning of modern cosmology.

That some of his own answers were wrong, does not matter. As in the case of the Ionian philosophers of the heroic age, the philosophers of the Renaissance were perhaps more remarkable for the revolutionary nature of the questions they asked than for the answers they proposed. Paracelsus and Bruno, Gilbert and Tycho, Kepler and Galileo formulated some answers which are still valid; but first and foremost they were giant question-masters. *Post factum*, however, it is always difficult to appreciate the originality and imagination it required to ask a question which had not been asked before.

Some of Kepler's questions were inspired by a mediæval brand of mysticism, and yet proved to be amazingly fertile. The shifting of the First Mover from the periphery of the universe into the physical body of the sun, symbol of the Godhead, prepared the way to the concept of a gravitational force, symbol of the Holy Ghost, which controls the planets. Thus a purely mystical inspiration was the root out of which the first rational theory of the dynamics of the universe developed, based on the secular trinity of Kepler's laws.

The *Mysterium Cosmographicum* contained the dreams, or germs, of most of Kepler's later discoveries—as by-products of its erroneous central idea. His irrational belief in its basic truth remained, emotionally, the motive power behind his achievements. The harnessing to a rational pursuit of the immense psychic energies derived from an irrational obsession seems to be another secret of genius, at least of genius of a certain type. It may also explain the distorted view of their own achievement so frequently found among them. Thus in Kepler's Notes to the *Mysterium* he proudly refers to some minor discoveries in his later works, but there is not one single mention of the first and second of his immortal Laws, which every schoolboy associates with his name—it was as if Einstein, in his old age, had been discussing his work without mentioning relativity.

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In the labyrinth of Kepler's mind, the thread of Ariadne was his Pythagorean mysticism, his religious-scientific quest for a harmonious universe governed by perfect crystal shapes or perfect chords. It was this thread that led him, through abrupt turns and dizzy gyrations, in and out of *culs-de-sac*, to the first exact laws of nature, to the mathematisation of science. He said his prayers in the language of mathematics, and distilled his mystic faith into a mathematician's Song of Songs:

> Thus God himself/was too kind to remain idle/ and began to play the games of signatures/signing his likeness unto the world: therefore I chance to think/that all nature and the graceful sky are/symbolised in the art of Geometria. . . ./ Now, as God the maker play'd/he taught the game to Nature/whom he created in his image:/ taught her the self-same game/which he played to her. . . .

Here at last was the jubilant refutation of Plato's cave. The living world no longer is a dim shadow of reality but Nature's dance to which God sets the tune. Man's glory lies in his understanding of the harmony and rhythm of the dance, an understanding made possible through his divine gift of thinking in numbers.

By the time Kepler wrote down this credo, the first stage in the young pilgrim's progress was completed. His religious doubts and anxieties had been transformed into the mystic's mature innocence—the Holy Trinity into a universal symbol, his craving for the gift of prophecy into the search for ultimate causes. The sufferings of a mange-eaten, chaotic childhood had left a sober thirst for universal law and harmony; memories of a brutal father may have influenced his vision of an abstract God, without human features, bound by mathematical rules which admitted of no arbitrary acts.

His physical appearance had undergone an equally radical change: the adolescent with the bloated face and spindly limbs had grown into a sparse, dark, wiry figure, charged with nervous energy, with chiselled features and a somewhat Mephistophelian profile, belied by the melancholia of the soft, short-sighted eyes. The restless student who had never been able to finish what he began, had changed into a scholar with a prodigious capacity for work, for physical and mental endurance, and a fanatical patience unequalled in the annals of science.

In the Freudian universe, Kepler's youth is the story of a successful cure of neurosis by sublimation, in Adler's, of a successfully compensated inferiority complex, in Marx's, History's response to the need of improved navigational tables, in the geneticist's, of a freak combination of genes. But if that were the whole story, every stammerer would grow into a Demosthenes, and sadistic parents ought to be at a premium. Perhaps Mercury in conjunction with Mars, taken with a few cosmic grains of salt, is as good an explanation as any other.

SUPPOSE . . . .

Suppose you had stood by the side of Galileo when he dropped objects of different weights and sizes from the top of the tower. Would you have tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Better not do that. Don't you realise you are introducing mankind to the scientific method and the study of physics? Don't you know that your experimenting will lead to a hydrogen bomb? Better stop right now before it's too late."

Of course you wouldn't have done that.

—From "The University and Its Public," by Clarence A. Schoenfeld.

For one thing, we can't speak Italian.

The New Yorker

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Richard H. Rovere

The Last Days of Joe McCarthy

Great was his fall

IN THE spring of the year 1954, there was the televised rumble over Private Schine, General Zwicker, Army Secretary Stevens, and others then of disputed rank and now of rapidly dimming lustre. In the late summer, there were the untelevised censure hearings presided over by Senator Arthur V. Watkins, a Mormon elder from Orem, Utah, who could play variations on the crack of doom with a chairman's gavel and who was so insistent on a pure, unclouded atmosphere that he posted *No Smoking* signs in the Senate Caucus Room—an act wholly without precedent. In the fall, there was the censure debate on the Senate floor—ending with a vote of sixty-seven *for*, twenty-two *against* a watered-down resolution of censure from which, at the very last moment and with a swift, concealed stroke of the pen, Vice-President Nixon struck the word "censure."

By winter, Joe McCarthy was through. He had not lost his following. He had not lost, so far as anyone knows, a single true friend. Lieutenant-General Stratemeyer headed up a committee of "Ten Million Americans Mobilising for Justice"; all the old militants rallied round, and by the day of the censure vote over a million signatures to a protest petition had been delivered to the Senate by armoured car. McCarthy had not lost any of the appurtenances of power. He still had his seat, his seniority, and his committee assignments. Exactly half his party in the Senate had stood by him and refused to support censure. Still and all, he was through, and everyone knew it. He had lost the power to panic the United States Senate and to shiver the White House timbers. Sixty-seven Senators, including twenty-two Republicans, had dared to vote against him, and the President had called in Senator Watkins, the Cato of Wasatch, to "congratulate him," in the words of James Hagerty, "for the splendid job he did." Far more important, McCarthy had lost his nerve. His drive, his superb sense of timing, and even some of his meanness seemed to have gone from him. Where he had once been steely, he grew rubbery. He still knew what to do in a back-alley fight, but he seldom did it. He no longer clawed his antagonists but made wisecracks and played sophomoric jokes on them. Asked for comment on the Senate resolution, he said, "I wouldn't exactly say it was a vote of confidence." He added, "I don't feel I've been lynched."

In the two-and-a-half years that remained of his life, McCarthy made only a few spiritless attempts at a come-back. Now and then, he would get the Senate floor to denounce someone or something, but never with much force and never with much of an audience. When he rose, Senators would drift out of the chamber, and the reporters in the gallery would see a chance to catch lunch, play cards, or find out what Lyndon Johnson was up to. From time to time, McCarthy could be seen shambling (or lurching, for he was drinking more and holding it less well) down the cor-

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ridors of the Senate Office Building en route to some committee room where photographers had been sighted. It wasn't of much use. Mostly they ignored him; if, for old times' sake, they didn't, their editors filed the pictures. He got free television time every so often, generally on some panel or interview show with a low Trendex, and used it to call Paul Hoffman "a throwback on the human race," Sherman Adams a "pinhead," or Harold Stassen "one of the most contemptible politicians of our era." It was the old language, but in another voice and mood.

For a while, he tried statesmanship. He hired a bright and earnest young rightist, L. Brent Bozell, to write him some meaty speeches on foreign and military policy. Some of them were quite good. One, on April 25th, 1956, described with remarkable prescience our lag in missile development and the political consequences of the lag; it may well have been the most prophetic speech of that year. But McCarthy felt as silly as he looked in a toga, and threw it aside. He made a pass at the farm vote. In the administration and in Congress, there were arguments over whether agricultural price supports should assure 85 or 87½ per cent or 90 per cent of parity. McCarthy said it was a lot of cheapskate talk and came out for 110 per cent of parity. This was a promising line for a demagogue down on his luck, but he soon dropped it. He couldn't seem to stick to anything. In the 1956 election, he played hardly any rôle at all. After the censure vote, he had made a "public apology . . . to the American people" for having once believed that the President was anti-Communist. After Mr. Eisenhower's heart attack in 1955, McCarthy said he thought it would be "unkind" to ask the President to run again; he said he thought that either J. Edgar Hoover or Herman Welker would make a good Republican candidate. He did not attend the San Francisco convention in 1956. Early in 1957, when Senator McClellan of Arkansas was getting high on the front pages by making life miserable for Dave Beck, McCarthy tried to get into the act—now by championing the teamster, now by bullyragging him. But he didn't work at it. He would come into the Caucus Room late, interrupt a line of questioning with questions of his own, some of which were incoherent, and after twenty minutes or so wander out in an almost trance-like state.

He was sick a lot of the time and frequently hospitalised, as a rule for the treatment of obscure ailments. The censure debate had been delayed for ten days because of one of these confinements. The Capitol physician, Dr. George Calver, explained that the Senator had "traumatic bursitis." Visited in the hospital, McCarthy said he had undergone surgery to have some pieces of glass removed from his elbow. (The story was that a Milwaukee admirer had shaken hands with him a bit too vigorously, pumping McCarthy's arm so hard his elbow cracked a glass-topped table.) The hospital doctors said there had been no surgery at all. It was always that way—mixed up. There was talk of back trouble, leg trouble, liver trouble, prostate trouble, lung trouble, heart trouble, and—always—bottle trouble. He would run alarmingly to fat, then he would grow gaunt; he lost forty-one pounds in a few weeks. Not even his closest friends knew what was wrong. There have been descriptions of him as having spent his last years in an unbroken alcoholic stupor. These descriptions are inaccurate. He had always been a heavy drinker, and there were times in those seasons of discontent when he drank more than before. But he was not always drunk. He went on the wagon (for him, this meant beer in place of whisky) for days and weeks at a time. The main trouble towards the end was that he couldn't hold the stuff; where once he had been able to "belt a fifth"—as members of his set would put it—between midnight and 5 a.m., sleep for a couple of hours, and be at the office at 8.30 or 9, he now went to pieces on the second drink.

Still and all, he did not devote his life to it. He was never a sot. He was as busy in that period as the average Senator and a lot busier than many. And he had a private life: he and his wife adopted a baby; he spent a good deal of time with his personal friends, a number

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of whom had never been his political friends; he went deer hunting, or at least he went into the Wisconsin woods.

He became much interested in money, and developed an obsession with financial security and investments. He began thinking in terms of a quiet, cosy, non-political age. "Jean and I have enough money for a small cattle spread in Arizona," he said. "I might open a law office for friends and neighbours." He knew people who knew the money game. On their advice, he took some fliers in oil and uranium, and made a sizeable fraction of a million on paper. His smart friends egged him on. Visions of sugarplums danced in his head; he was on the wagon now, a dedicated speculator. Then some of the people who had been going along for the ride decided they had gone far enough. They quit while they were ahead and while McCarthy was in Wisconsin and, momentarily, not keeping up with his portfolio. He sustained heavy losses. This was very close to the end. He fell off the wagon in a heap.

On April 28th, 1957, he was admitted to Bethesda Naval Hospital. Mrs. McCarthy said he had gone for the treatment of a "knee injury." He was put in the neurological section. The Navy doctors announced that his condition had been diagnosed as "peripheral neuritis." Four days later, on May 2nd, he breathed his last, just in time for the seven o'clock news. ("In time for the seven o'clock news" was his favourite time for uncovering a new master spy, for blistering Sherman Adams, or for telling Eisenhower to watch his step.) The first obituaries gave no cause of death. They reported that he was forty-seven, having reached that age the preceding November 9th. When someone checked his birth certificate in Grand Chute, Wisconsin, it was found that he had turned forty-eight the preceding November 14th. Mrs. McCarthy wanted a posthumous triumph for him in the Senate. He got it. He was the first Senator in seventeen years—the last had been the old Idaho windbag, William Borah—to receive a state funeral in the Senate chamber. "This fallen warrior through death speaketh," the Reverend Frederick Brown Harris, the Senate chaplain said, and the burden of his embarrassing message was that the prophet is not without honour except, etc. The flag-draped coffin was put on a plane with two reporters aboard and flown to Green Bay, Wisconsin. The airborne wake was provisioned as the best wakes generally are. Grief was held at bay over—literally over—McCarthy's dead body. On May 7th the fallen warrior was given a Catholic funeral at St. Mary's Church in Appleton, then laid to rest in a cemetery on a bluff overlooking the Fox River.

Mystery still surrounds the cause of death. The Bethesda doctors said they had erred in their original diagnosis of peripheral neuritis, which is an inflammation of the nerve ends furthest from the central nervous system. They explained, after the fact, that on subsequent examination and consultation it had been found that McCarthy had been suffering from hepatitis, a chic malady formerly known as jaundice. They ascribed death to "acute hepatitic infection" and "hepatitic failure." Hepatitis and peripheral neuritis have about as much in common as Asian flu and a broken ankle. *Hepar* is Greek for liver; hepatitis is an inflammation of that organ, debilitating but seldom fatal. *Time* reported that McCarthy had died of "cirrhosis of the liver." In cirrhosis, the liver turns into something the consistency of wet sawdust, the commonest agent for the transformation being alcohol. Many people are convinced that McCarthy drank himself to death. One way or another, he probably did—but not, perhaps, in the usual way. It is conceivable that years of drinking had given him a wet-sawdust liver, but the suddenness of his death suggests another possibility. He had had hepatitis, and for a victim of this disease alcohol even in small amounts is poison. The chances are that his last drinking bouts—begun when he got the bad news about his investments—did him in. Either way, liquor and the liver had something to do with it.

WHEN he died, the true believers cried murder most foul. That is what true believers always do. They said, as one might

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have expected them to, that the Communists, the Truman-Acheson Democrats, the bleeding hearts, the eggheads, the Eisenhower Republicans, the Americans for Democratic Action, the Army Department coddlers of Communists, the Adams-Brownell clique, all the forces of darkness, subversion, and betrayal had come together to crush this patriot and had succeeded in destroying his will to live. The McCarthyite publisher, William Loeb of Manchester, New Hampshire, said that McCarthy's enemies, among whom he numbered "that stinking hypocrite in the White House" had "worn down his adrenal and other glands." Others were less violent and less clinical. They said McCarthy had died of a broken heart, brought on by contemplation of a broken crusade. They would have said this if he had been struck by lightning or bitten by a rabid dog, but the known subjectivity of their judgment does not make it false. The will to live is, we know, a necessary condition of living. Life may endure when it is gone, but when life is challenged by disease or the ravages of time or a heedless mode of existence, it may hang on desire. There is reason to suppose that McCarthy's distress at the very end had more to do with a broken bankbook and a shattered dream of a cattle spread than with a broken crusade, but that scarcely matters. The crusade, such as it was, had ended for him two-and-a-half years earlier. And whether drinking was a primary or a secondary cause of his death, the fact remains that he could probably have held on to life by not drinking, and he elected to drink.

To acknowledge this much, though, is to raise a whole series of questions about McCarthy. Why was he undone by the events of 1954? What was his heart made of that it should break so easily? His defeats were real enough, but they were of the sort on which most leaders of mass movements thrive. Hitler, at one end of the moral spectrum, and Gandhi, at the other, rose phoenix-like from a half-dozen such defeats. What, after all, was so terrible about the events of 1954? He was in a brawl on television, and a lot of Americans got a close look at him and set him down as a plug-ugly. But the people who found him repulsive had never been his followers anyway, and never could have been. To the hard core, and to most of those who formed around it, his nastiness was part of his charm. The more he ranted, the more they loved him, and he was a Caruso among ranters. To be scorned by the respectable, disowned by Eisenhower, half-heartedly "censured" by the Senate—why should any of this have mattered? He wasn't left to rot in a dungeon. He retained his liberties and his office. His followers were still all about him—waiting, if they were of the authentic breed of those fetched by demagogues, for a rallying cry, an order to regroup and resume the attack. Their leader was young and vigorous.

If he had been a Hitler, he might have burned down the Senate. Being McCarthy, he hired a lawyer—one of the country's best, Edward Bennett Williams—and sought an acquittal. When he didn't get it, he buckled before respectable and official opinion. He shared its view that he hadn't much of a future. And he soon died because he could not lay off liquor. This, too, is odd. Historically, it is unheard of that the leader of a crusade, or any true fanatic, should die in this way. Normally, such men—the demonic and the saintly alike—are ascetics. Their dreams of power and glory are headier brews than anything fermented or distilled.

Such questions rest, of course, on the premise that McCarthy was a man of real stature in his field. I believe it can be demonstrated that he was not only the ablest demagogue of his time but the most gifted ever bred on American shores. Most of our demagogues, in this century and the last, have been provincial and parochial figures—their influence limited to a region or a sect. In the 19th century, abolition, secession, populism, and nativism produced a few rabble-rousers of proficiency, but none who left a lasting impact on the country and none who are widely remembered to-day. It may be too early to say that McCarthy's influence will still be felt twenty years from now, but the chances seem good that it will be. In any case,

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consider his achievements, or ravages, between 1950 and 1954:

—Unknown in 1950, he made himself a global figure by 1952. In many parts of the world, he was the personification of all that was held to be evil in American policy and American life. He was one of the few Americans ever to be actively feared and hated by foreigners.

—Less than two years after his ascent from obscurity, he became a central issue in a Presidential campaign. He was still a first-term Senator in the minority party. He had no rank or power except that which he generated for himself, within himself.

—He gained enormous influence over American foreign policy at a time when American policy bore heavily on world history. Our diplomacy in the Far East, in many respects a key to our diplomacy elsewhere, might have borne a very different aspect if it had not been for McCarthy's power.

—He stamped with his name a tendency, a whole cluster of tendencies in American life. The name survives. To many Americans, whatever is illiberal, anti-intellectual, repressive, reactionary, totalitarian, or merely swinish will hereafter be "McCarthyism." The word is imprecise, but it conveys a meaning and a powerful image.

For all of the black arts that he practised, McCarthy's natural endowments and his cultivated skills were of the highest order. "The qualities necessary to a demagogue," Aristophanes wrote, "are these: to be foul-mouthed, base-born, a low, mean fellow." McCarthy qualified handsomely. He was the master of the scabrous and the scatological. He understood the perverse appeal of the bum, the mucker, the dead-end kid, the James Jones-Nelson Algren hero to a nation in the midst of a vast levelling process in which everyone was sliding, from one direction or the other, into middle-class respectability, and he was quick to make it. He had some decent instincts—who hasn't?—and some yearnings of his own for lace-curtain, wall-to-wall respectability, but he overcame these with conspicuous ease. He was a fighter who used his thumbs, his teeth, and his knees. His style, I have always thought, owed a lot to that of a certain kind of American athlete: the kind who swaggers and exaggerates his swagger, the kind who looks ugly and talks ugly and earns such sobriquet as *Killer* or *Slugger*, the kind who attaches enough importance to winning the god-damned game to throw spitballs and rabbit punches and do a little work with knees and elbows in the pile-ups. He boasted of how he had been taught to go straight for the groin by an old north-woods scamp named Indian Charlie. The rank and file were pleased to know that the leader had been trained by this sage mentor.

HE HAD an extraordinary bag of tricks. Hitler discovered the uses of the Big Lie—the falsehood so large and round that reason, which deals in particulars, was almost powerless to combat it. McCarthy invented the Multiple Lie—the lie with so many particulars, so many moving and interchangeable parts, so many tiny gears and fragile connecting rods that reason exhausted itself in the effort to combat it. He said so many different things about so many different people (people generally, of uncertain identity and even, so far as the public was concerned, of questionable existence) that no one could keep it all in focus.

He brought to perfection a kind of shell game to be played with facts, or what George Orwell called "unfacts." He flummoxed me with it the first time I met him, which was a year or so before he discovered Communism. I wished to get certain information about one of his undertakings, and he brought me into his office to show me some "documents" that would, he said, be TNT. "Wait'll you get a load of this," he said. "It's going to rock the country." All eager, I began to look at his photostats, his clippings, his "confidential" reports, his copies of other people's correspondence. A feeling of foolishness—mine, not his—came over me when I was unable to see that any of them proved anything about anything. No TNT. "But I don't quite get it," I would say. "It doesn't seem to have much to do with what I'm after." "It has a lot to do with it," he would

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say, "but naturally those bastards were trying to cover up. Now look at this one, it will make the others clear. We've got a jigsaw puzzle here, see, and we've got to put the pieces together." I thought he was making sense and that my perceptions were at fault. "Please explain this," I would ask, and he would answer, "It'll all be clear when you've studied a few more of these documents." He would deal some from the bottom of the deck, and I would curse myself for my obtuseness. It was not until I had spent hours with him that it dawned on me that I was being switched, double-shuffled, and conned by one of the masters.

There was an audacity about him, a sweep to his imagination that was quite simply beyond the comprehension of most of those with whom he had to deal. He cloaked himself in sovereignty—diplomatic, political, moral. He was not bound by the Constitution, the party system, or any version of the categorical imperative. In May 1953, he advised the world of the fact that he had negotiated an agreement with the Greek maritime interests that would result in denying to Communist China goods delivered in Greek bottoms. And though he exaggerated wildly in his descriptions of what had occurred, the fact remained that he had constituted himself an agency for the conduct of foreign relations. When it suited his purposes, which was most of the time, he was an open seditionist. In 1952, 1953, and 1954, he organised among government workers a Loyal American Underground. This was an insurrectionist cabal that reported directly to McCarthy and his lieutenants and gave him their primary loyalty. McCarthy was, as all great demagogues are, a revolutionist.

He operated far outside the framework of American political morality. This is not to say that he was immoral or amoral rather than moral; it is rather to say that he ignored the conventions of American politics. Cheating of one sort or another is, of course, tolerated in politics. But there are limits of tolerance, and it was one of McCarthy's distinctions—one of the marks, if you will, of his greatness—that he simply did not consider that the *No Trespassing* signs were for him. It is, for example, within limits to misrepresent a fact; but the convention holds that it must be a *fact* that is misrepresented. For McCarthy, this silly rule had no meaning. When he wished to have it believed that Senator Tydings of Maryland consorted with Communists, he was not embarrassed by lack of evidence that could be manipulated in such a way as to leave this impression. He fabricated the evidence: a photograph of Millard Tydings and a photograph of Earl Browder, the Communist leader, taken at a different time in a different place were mounted together, and offered as a photograph of the two consorting.

I recall him once, early in his career, rising to the Senate floor and announcing that he was going to quote a letter from one government official to another. What he read had a very fishy sound, and a couple of other Senators interrupted to say they thought McCarthy must be "quoting out of context." They asked that the entire letter be made part of the record, so that Senators could judge its import for themselves. McCarthy said he would get around to that later; meanwhile, he wished to exercise his privilege of quoting what he wished to quote. When, eventually, the letter did get into the record, it turned out that he had not been quoting out of context—*for he had not been quoting at all.* What he had held in his hand might have been a picture of Zsa Zsa Gabor; he had simply invented, standing there on the Senate floor, lines that served his purpose at the moment. Within the framework of political morality, it is permitted for a man to deal in half-truths, words wrenched from context, and so forth, but not to deal, as he did, in wholly imaginary texts.

AND of course he was a genius at that essential American strategy—publicity. He knew what it was made of, the very texture of it. He knew the newspapermen and how and when they worked and what their deadlines were, what made a "lead," what made an "overnight," what made a good "sidebar." He knew, in his good days, how

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to get into the news even on those rare occasions when invention failed him and he had no unfacts to give out. For example, he would call a press conference in the morning for the purpose of announcing that he was going to call a press conference in the afternoon. The reporters would come in, and McCarthy would say that he just wanted to give them the word that he was going to make a shattering announcement in the afternoon for use in the morning papers. Headline in the afternoon papers: NEW MCCARTHY REVELATIONS AWAITED IN CAPITAL. When the appointed hour came, the reporters as often as not found McCarthy nowhere around. He had given his secretary a note saying that he had to delay his shattering revelation in order to get some "documents"—documents, documents, documents, how well he knew what suckers Americans are for "documents"—that would make it even more shattering, when it came.

He brought himself to public notice by one of his most dazzling inventions. He said, in his famous Wheeling, West Virginia, speech, that there were 205 Communists in the State Department and that he had right there with him a list of them. He later claimed that he had been misunderstood, saying once that his figure was 81 and another time that it was 57, but these revisions are unimportant (except that they, too, got him in the papers) alongside the fact that he picked a *specific* number and a *large* one. Had he said, that day when he was an unknown and evidently uninteresting Senator, that there were three Communists in the State Department, or seven, or that he had reason to believe that there might be quite a lot of them, no one would have paid the slightest attention to him (SENATOR CHARGES COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN STATE DEPARTMENT might have turned up over a two-inch story on Page 15 of your local newspaper). Many people, after all, were saying something of that sort. But when he said there were "205" or even "57" and that he had their names in his hand (naturally, he didn't have any names; all he had was a letter from James Byrnes to Adolph Sabath giving some figures, without a single name, on loyalty investigations), the press simply had to go wild.

The very sight of a newspaperman would set his mind going. Once he ran into a pair of them idling along in the Senate Office Building. "You two looking for a story?" he asked, knowing full well that their answer would be, "Sure, have you got one?" "Mmm," he said, "now let's see." The three walked along together, took an elevator to the basement and boarded the little subway that leads to the Capitol. McCarthy was thinking hard. Then he lighted up. "I'm going to subpœna Truman, that's what I'm going to do." He reached in his pocket where he always kept a wad of blank subpœnas, and began making one out for the ex-President. "You're not serious, Joe, you can't be," one of the reporters said. "What are you going to subpœna him for?" McCarthy tapped his big skull with his forefinger several times. "Oh, I'm calling him to testify about Harry Dexter White, that's what."

Publicity helps; indeed, without it all is lost. But McCarthy had far more than a flair for press-agentry. And he had more than the luck that presented him with the Communist issue in 1950. (It *was* largely accident. He had been casting about for speech material of any sort, and a friend tipped him off to some largely unused material on infiltration that had been gathered, filed, and forgotten by an investigating committee a couple of years back. It had been forgotten because it wasn't very impressive—but there it was, unused. Now it belongs to the ages.) The issue was not to be scoffed at—certainly not in the aftermath of the Hiss case. McCarthy was not the first to pounce on it, but he was the first to build a large career on it. To it, he contributed his own personality, which was formidable. He was an authentic mob organiser and galvaniser. He may not have drawn out the affection and bonhomie that Huey Long could get; he may not have been able to reach into the dark places of the American soul as Hitler could reach into the dark places of the German soul. This may have been because there are too many American souls—no one man, of good or evil bent, can rally us all.

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But McCarthy had his own ways, and they were very American and very effective, and he rallied a large minority.

And then he ran into some heavy weather, gave up the struggle, and shortly thereafter died. Why? The issue was still hot. There were other issues to be exploited. He was still a young man.

Civic virtue has proposed several answers, to wit:

—Truth crushed to earth does not burrow out of sight, but in happy reality rises again. The facts, in time, found McCarthy out, and after that his cause was hopeless.

—You can't fool even many of the people all the time. No sizeable number will forever put up with a lout.

—He had only slime for mortar. Demagogues, to be truly successful, must hold up to their following some hope and plan, however malign in content, for making life better and more equitable. This McCarthy failed to do. He was a mischief-maker, a destroyer, a nihilist, and in the end he could not even satisfy himself.

No doubt each of these points has merit, but even if they explain McCarthy's defeats in 1954, they do not account for his acceptance of them. Normally, demagogues, like lovers and poets, simply do not recognise rejection and repudiation. Juan Péron, thrown out of his own country and subsequently a refugee from his place of refuge, continues to inflame his followers and to stir things up in half a dozen countries.

I believe that just as the sources of McCarthy's power were to be found in McCarthy's person, there, too, may be found the principal reasons for his easy capitulation in 1954.

McCarthy was a great demagogue, but he was, in my view, an essentially frivolous one. The world took him seriously, as indeed it should have, but he never really took himself seriously. He was the leader of a fanatical movement, and he gave his name to a fanatical doctrine, but he was no kind of fanatic himself. He was a hell-raiser, a born troublemaker, a political racketeer, a con man who loved the game for its own sake. It is conceivable that in his later days he began to believe what he was saying and to imagine himself truly persecuted by his enemies; at times, during the Army-McCarthy hearings, he would fly into fits of what appeared to be genuine hysteria. He may by then have cast his spell over himself.

But even this is doubtful. He was capable of going into a tantrum before the television cameras and screaming, "Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, Point of Order, Point of Order," tearing passions to tatters, announcing that he could bear no more of "this farce" and would dignify it with his presence not a moment longer—and then making a beeline for the Gent.'s Room, the objective he had in mind when he began the outburst. Why not put nature into politics? Sometimes he would "walk out" and get no further than a corner of the room that was out of the sweep of the cameras, there to observe calmly and be amused by the commotion he had caused. He often timed his walk-outs for the newspaper deadlines.

If he came to believe his own lies and to hate and fear his detractors as they hated and feared him, he did so only sporadically. If he fell under his own spell, the spell quickly passed. He was, to be sure, a prince of hatred. The haters rallied round him; at a word from him, their hate glands would puff and swell —fresh supplies of venom would flow into their venom sacs. But this most successful and menacing of all our apostles of hatred was himself as incapable of true rancour, spite, and animosity as a eunuch is of marriage. He just did not have the equipment for it. He faked it all and couldn't understand anyone who didn't. When he ran into Dean Acheson in a Senate elevator, he thought it cold and unfriendly of Acheson to respond to his "Hello, Dean," with clenched teeth and a crimson forehead. When, in the Army-McCarthy hearings, he sank to what even Roy Cohn knew to be the very bottom of the pit of degradation—by trying to hurt Joseph Welch, the Army's attorney, with a wholly gratuitous smear on a young friend and

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associate of Welch's who had nothing whatever to do with the case—he was baffled by the way everyone shrank from him and cleared the path before him as before a leper (Unclean! Unclean!) when he left the Caucus Room. They had all been on Welch's side when he addressed McCarthy:

"Until this moment, Senator, I think I had never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness. . . . If it were in my power to forgive you for your reckless cruelty, I would do so. I like to think that I am a gentle man, but your forgiveness will have to come from someone other than me."

When, later, McCarthy at last found someone who would speak to him, he held out his hands, palms upward, and said, "What did I *do*?" He knew what he had *said*, of course, but I believe he genuinely did not know what he had *done*. In his mind, there was a severance between words and their meanings. A year or so before he died, he met at a Washington party a former associate, a man he had publicly betrayed and ruined. He went up to this man and within the hearing of the astonished guests asked why they had not seen each other in months. "Jeanie was talking about you the other night," he said. "How come we never see you? What the hell are you trying to do—*avoid* us?"

I am trying to suggest—it is a perilous as well as a difficult undertaking—that there was to this ogreish creature a kind of innocence that may be one of the clues to his fate. The man was a moral vacuum. Somehow or other, he could simulate hatred and several other passions, but he was numb to the sensations they produced in others. Perhaps because of this, certainly in spite of it, he had —dare one say it now?—a certain personal charm. It must be said, for there were many people who loathed him and liked him. Among them were several of the reporters who were assigned to him regularly, who referred to themselves as the Goon Squad, and who put the Republic greatly in their debt by their scholarly and unrelenting pursuit of the truths he sought to bury with his Multiple Lies. Many of them were fond of him, as he was fond of many of them; they knifed him in their stories, they knew full well that his knife was always drawn for them, yet they could drink together and be, in a sense, friends.

There was the classic case of the celebrated English journalist, a man who had convinced himself at his desk in London that McCarthy was a great beast at large in the world—a monster that had to be destroyed, and right away, in the name of human decency. He appointed himself a St. George, grabbed up his typewriter, and boarded the first transatlantic plane he could make. He was to write a series of articles so powerful that McCarthy, exposed at last, would immediately be crushed. Naturally, he had to see the dragon. In Washington, he phoned McCarthy's office and asked for an appointment. He got one right away. Bracing himself, reminding himself that violence never solved anything, he went off to the appointment. He was shown in, and the opening conversation went something like this:

McCarthy: They tell me you're a hell of a reporter. Have a drink?

Celebrated Journalist: Senator McCarthy, I think you should know that I despise you and everything you stand for. I think you are the greatest force for evil in the world to-day.

McC.: No kidding. How about the drink? What'll you have?

C.J.: I have just told you, Senator McCarthy, that I loathe and detest you. I am here to expose you. It will get you nowhere to try to be kind to me.

McC.: We can talk later. Now what . . . ?

C.J.: I will start talking now. I wish only to warn you fairly that you can expect no quarter from me. In my opinion . . .

McC.: For chrissake, are you going to have a drink or aren't you? Let's settle that first.

C.J. (nearly dehydrated): If it is clearly understood that I am under no obligations, that I am not retracting one word that I have said about you, that your hospitality will not gain you my good opinion, I will join you in a drink. I will, if you please, have some whisky, with perhaps just a dash of soda.

McC.: Good.

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The interview then began and proceeded without interruption for an hour or so. The Londoner could not put a question without telling McCarthy what a foul and poisonous creature he was. McCarthy could not answer without offering some more whisky with perhaps just a splash of soda. Both were loaded almost to the muzzle when McCarthy was reminded that he had a dentist's appointment. He invited St. George to come along, and the interview went on in so far as it was possible with McCarthy's great jaw clamped open and a dentist with trembling hands worked over McCarthy's cavities and tried to keep his head in an atmosphere blue with the talk and quavering with the fumes of the bourbon he had consented to allow his patient to use as a rinse. Back in McCarthy's office, and after that in McCarthy's apartment, the interview still continued, in a much degenerated form, and carried over to the next morning. Finally it ended. The Englishman wrote his articles; they burned with moral outrage, but they were not quite so powerful an assault on McCarthy as he had hoped they would be. He was not destroyed.

THE night McCarthy died, a friend of his, one with nothing but contempt for the rôle McCarthy had played, returned home late in the evening to find his wife, who had also found it possible to be fond of McCarthy, sitting by the radio and weeping—not in pure grief, as it turned out, but in frustration. She had, she explained, listened to all the comments that had been made about McCarthy's death. "Everyone has said the same thing," she said through her tears, "and they have all been wrong, wrong, wrong! They have told exactly the opposite of the truth. They all hated him, but they had to find a saving grace for their obituaries, so what have they given him?—sincerity. Each one had said, 'At least he was sincere—he believed in what he was doing,' when that was the one god-damn thing you couldn't say of him." She went on in lachrymose eloquence. "He was a stinker, he was never sincere, he'd never thought of *believing* in what he was doing. There wasn't much good you could say of him, except that he was generous to his friends and a few of us couldn't *help* liking him. No one has said that, and no one will. Only this junk about his being 'sincere.' "

McCarthy simulated belief for the true believers. Among those who knew him, very few thought that he spoke from any kind of conviction. He was a political speculator, a wildcatter who drilled Communism and saw it come up a gusher. He liked his gusher, but he would have liked any other just as well. He was an enormously skilful manipulator of political issues, but he was almost wholly indifferent to them. He had run for the Senate with valuable assistance from the Communists ("Communists have the same right to vote as anyone else, don't they," he had said when taxed with his left-wing support, and to get more of it, he had said, "Stalin's proposal for world disarmament is a great thing"), and he had spent four years in the Senate making scarcely a mention of Communism. When he found there was something in it, he worked it, but he was a lazy as well as a frivolous demagogue, and he never really mastered it. He served up what Roy Cohn gave him to serve up; most of the time, he didn't know what he was talking about or even whom he was talking about. (The late Howard Rushmore, a real specialist, left McCarthy's employ because he couldn't stand the sloppiness of the organisation. "Those files," Rushmore said with a shudder. "My God, what a mess.") McCarthy was singular. Only he could say, on a spring day in 1950, that the next morning he would name "the Number One Communist spy in the United States," when in fact he had not the slightest idea of whom he would name—and then deliver the next morning the name of a man of whose very existence he had been unaware the previous day. No one but McCarthy could hold up a scrap of paper that might have been a parking ticket or a laundry list, anything but a list of Communists in a government agency—and say it was a list of Communists in a government agency.

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McCarthy was a demon, but he was not, to our great good fortune, a man possessed by demons. His talents as a demagogue were great, but he lacked the most necessary and awesome of demagogic gifts—a belief in the sacredness of his own mission. To persevere in the face of adversity, a man needs the courage of his convictions, and if he has no convictions he can scarcely draw courage from them. It was the lack of conviction that made him at once a more vulnerable and interesting human being than any of his followers. The conviction he lacked was an absurd thing, and any man was the better for not having it. His friend and lawyer, Edward Bennett Williams, has always insisted that McCarthy's was a glory drive, not a power drive, and the distinction seems a valid one, in his case and in general.

The glory drive is always less dangerous because it is more easily frustrated. It is selfish, or self-seeking, in the narrowest sense, and it makes defeat and humiliation a more personal affair. "Faith in a holy cause," Eric Hoffer has written, "is to a considerable extent a substitute for the lost faith in ourselves." If McCarthy ever had faith in a holy cause he lost it early and reposed all his faith in himself. He was a cynic, a true one. Cynicism is never admirable, but it is better for the world when a man as gifted as McCarthy is contemptuous of morality than when he is aflame over a vicious and destructive one.

Oliver Bernard

Early Summer

These are the loveliest evenings: gentle leaves
Lazily sift the breezes; flowers let fall
Sweetness in air. To all that easily grieves
These days of early summer but recall
Earlier summer days, and so enrich
Emotion that it seems there is good in grief
If grief can weep on summer evenings which
Turn gentle in the breeze as a green leaf.

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D. J. Enright

Empire of the English Tongue

"Corrcet Your English"
(*sign outside private school in Bangkok*)

"Come Come Baby—English Conversation School"
(*sign outside private school in Kobe*)

AS THE above instances suggest, the Empire is often of the American tongue, and at times it is a rather seedy sort of empire, ravaged by diverse warlords. But it seems likely to last longer than most, for the simple reason that it is so useful to all concerned, to intellectuals as well as business men as well as taxi-dancers.

*

Spirit and body are not to be dissociated, and the conventions of Eastern arts began to show their intransigence, and hence their inadequacy, soon after Western guns and medicine entered their homelands. The initial period of disintegration is now over, and Eastern societies are falling into patterns of culture which we can understand reasonably well: understand in the sense of participate in, not merely tolerate out of our kindly liberal hearts: and which at the same time we recognise as "oriental," since they preserve, however thinly in places, the necessary thread of continuity. We sometimes talk of the cultural disruption and artistic anarchy which the modern East is suffering (perhaps taking pleasure in so talking, because *we did it*)—as if we in the West were as firmly and confidently rooted in our culture as Mount Olympus in Greece. At any rate, in the East they make their mistakes and messes with a kind of joy and certainly with energy.

The teacher of English is a privileged observer (setting aside the occasional brickbat) of this great contemporary phenomenon, beside which sputniks pale and the moon is a bore: the resurgence of the East, almost one might say the growing up of that immense ancient baby. The English tongue is, obviously enough, still "foreign"; and by and large one is forced into a perhaps unwonted honesty when using a foreign language. I would suggest that a simple word-list such as that printed in the research bulletin* of a Tokyo women's university tells more about Japanese attitudes (and not merely Japanese attitudes to the West) than any of the books-on-the-country. In offering a short selection from Miss Isshiki's compilation, I should explain that English and other foreign terms do feature more respectably in Japanese life (in medicine, science, trade, literary criticism, etc.). For my selection reveals in parts a rather less honest trait, common to all countries, of finding a foreign name for a dubious though domestic object.

denki-sutando: denki (Jap. electric) + stand . . . electric lamp stand. (N.B. here and elsewhere the "u" is hardly sounded.)
einеru: ei (Jap. English) + [flan]nel . . . flannel imported from England. (N.B. the "l" becomes "r".)
gera-zuri: gal[ley proof] + zuri (Jap. printing) . . . galley proof.
gaideri: gai[koku] (Jap. foreign country) + dele[gate] . . . a foreign delegate. This is specially used by college students.
moba: mo[dern] + ba[ba] (Jap. woman, not

* "Foreign-Japanese Blends in Modern Japanese," Masako Isshiki, *The Tsuda Review*, No. 1, November, 1956.

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necessarily old in this case)... a wealthy and usually immoral woman.

moji: mo[dern] + ji[ji] (Jap. old man)... an immoral old man.

romansu-boorudo: romance + bald... a bald-headed gentleman in his fifties who is apt to have love affairs.

bijinesu-rabu: business + love... sham love in order to earn money; for example, waitresses' flirting with guests.

teinoroji: tei[shu] (Jap. husband) + noro[shi] (Jap. greatly devoted to somebody) + [psycho-lo]gy... a wife too indulgent to her husband.

peragoro: [o]pera + goro[tsuki] (Jap. vagabond)... bad boys who are always chasing opera actresses.

itto-gaaru: "It" (Eng. sex appeal) + girl.

chinkushan: chin (Jap. puppy) + ku[shami] (Jap. sneeze) + schön (Ger. beautiful)... a girl whose face is like that of a puppy when it sneezes, that is, a girl of a very funny face.

ideoro-hime: ideolo[gy] + hime (Jap. princess)... a girl who is a theory monger and not at all good in practical life.

marukusu-gaaru: Marx + girl... a girl progressive in ideas, but careless of appearance for economical reasons.

saron-marukisuto: salon + Marxist... those who discuss Marxism in the gorgeous salon of a rich person; armchair Marxists.

arukan: al[cohol-poisoned] + kan[bu] (Jap. leaders)... a sarcastic reference to dishonest leaders who drink much at public expense.

goo-sutoppu: go + stop... traffic signals.

demoru: demo[nstration] + [su]ru (Jap. verb suffix, "to do")... to conduct a demonstration.

dekaru: deca[dence] + [su]ru... to live a degraded life.

nihiru: nihi[lism] + su[ru]... to become desperate.

pedaru: peda[ntic] + [su]ru... to try to appear scholarly, using unnecessarily hard words.

tagoru: Tago[re] + [su]ru... people supposed that Tagore (who visited Japan some twenty-five years ago) meditated a great deal; hence the meaning, "to doze, especially in classrooms." College slang.

torotteru: [fox]-tro[t] + [shi]teru (Jap. is or are doing)... a person who is always restless, as if dancing the fox-trot.

hapii-endo: happy + end[ing]... happy ending.

This list implies the lack of flexibility in certain ways of the Japanese language as such and indicates the ingenuity and imaginativeness of the Japanese themselves. They have not scrupled (apart from a minority of purists) to adopt and adapt, and the results are more pleasing and convincing than perhaps, in theory, they have any right to be.

THE position is different where the Thais are concerned, for they rarely take over foreign words, preferring to create new words from old roots. In this sense they are more "traditionalist" than the Japanese; and even in the transcription of English, strange transformations may take place. The sign TAIRON could hardly be deciphered without extraneous information, were it not for the rolls of cloth in the window. For the common oriental confusion of "l" and "r" is here combined with (in reverse, however) the Thai (from Sanskrit) use of "l" in transliterating final "n". (The town Ubol is pronounced "Ubon"; the ex-Premier, Pibul, is pronounced "Pibun".) Despite the complexity of misapprehension, the total effect is one of austerity, unlike the humorous, poetic, or disastrous (SUNLIGHT SOAP: LEVER BROTHELS) effects achieved by Japanese sign-painters.

My chief concern here is with the reactions of Thai students to the ardours and mysteries of English literature. But at the outset we are faced with an interesting linguistic crux—Thai or Siamese? "Thai" is an old word, and it was simply its use by foreign countries, instead of "Siamese," that Marshal Pibul Songgram's government insisted on towards the end of the 'thirties. Its subsequent history was as eccentric as the country's political manœuvres. In 1940 Thailand concluded non-aggression pacts with France, Britain, and Japan. In late 1941 the Japanese invaded Thailand, and the Thais necessarily capitulated and sensibly capitulated quickly. In January of the next year Thailand declared war on Britain and America. Therewith New Zealand and Australia declared war on "Siam," but these declarations were not accepted by Thailand on the grounds that they were addressed to a non-existent country. In August of 1945 Thailand withdrew its declarations of war against Britain and America and reverted to "Siam." At present, however, Siam is "Thailand."

The preference for "Thai" is strong in students. Indeed many young people object

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to the other term as strongly as any Ghanaian might object to his country being called the Gold Coast: it seems to be almost that sort of bad word. And yet the usual vindication of the usage "Thai" rests on its suitability, since the word means "free," and in fact the Thais have never been colonised. It may be that this is a case of "protesting too much," and those who insist on it know that their country is in fact not "free" (no one can accept so much foreign aid and remain morally free) and naturally resent the fact. Though I have yet to see Thai or Siamese students treading underfoot the cartons of ice-cream labelled "To the Thai People from their friends the American People."

On the other hand, the word "Siamese" appears to be favoured by Anglophile Thais of an older vintage; by those wishing to dissociate themselves from the "nationalistic" period immediately preceding the war; by those who feel that the word "free" is acquiring some of that murky atmosphere which clings about the other word, "peace"; perhaps by those who are resigned to political corruption (those who participate in it, I imagine, would be assiduous in their devotion to "Thai"); and of course by the large body of Thais who want to make bewildered foreigners feel more at home. Most foreign residents have friends in both camps, and so switch from "Thai" to "Siamese" as the situation suggests. "Siam" is certainly a romantic, evocative, and (for us) time-honoured appellation; whereas "Thailand," as commonly mispronounced, merely sounds like a Chinese dance-hall. But the latter must carry the day, at least the present day, chiefly because the Thais wish it, partly in expiation of the disservices done by the various *entrepreneurs* of the Anna myth.

But to return to our sheep. The following specimens are not presented for the purpose of arousing superior mirth. Most of us would be happy to write Thai, or any other foreign language, as judiciously. They are put forward as indicating, at least occasionally, national character and the mixed response to the continuing process of quasi-internationalisation.

Some of them do not indicate much beyond an uncertain grasp of a foreign tongue and a consequent simple-minded reaction to fairly complex literary creations. "Octavia is 'a battered lottery' to Antony, to Antony 'will to his Egyptian fish again.' " She is a lottery, as is all marriage (lottery is a popular institution in Thailand, however), and a battered one at that, perhaps because she is a widow and less than beautiful (this is the land of beauty queens). Antony returns to his fish, like the dog to his vomit: for however beautiful Cleopatra may have been (a real beauty queen, in fact), she was a Bad Woman (there can be no shilly-shallying on this point): fish is a common and cheap commodity. Finally, Cleopatra was "bitten by an aspect," and high time too. In a similar spirit, Macbeth *is* the monster of the examination question, for whom we feel no pity, because "our Lord Buddha tells us that it is wrong to kill," and Macbeth has undoubtedly done that. Lady Macbeth also receives short shrift, since she has called her husband a coward and no good woman would take that liberty. The lady undergraduates (who comprise over ninety per cent of the arts students these days) are inclined to censoriousness.

One suspects an element of play-acting in this sort of coyness. After all, a fair amount of killing does go on here (political and otherwise), and at times no one is even arraigned—let alone called a monster. But presumably it is because the depths are seething with passion that the surface must be kept mild and proper. And this would account for the fact that in the north-east a man can be fined for touching a woman, and at the university a fainting girl must be induced into an armchair before the young men may bear her downstairs and off to a doctor. Even so, the mealy mouth does sometimes melt, under the strain of examination conditions and a foreign language. One young lady, writing on the Differences between Thai Literature and English Literature, remarked that "Thai literature is full of detailed descriptions of sexual act, which English literature is not. Or perhaps I have not read enough."

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Unlike the generality of students (especially female ones), the Thais are not great scribblers. It is too hot. The thought evaporates in the head as the ink in the pen. They thus tend towards aphoristic statement. "Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* for telling men how the was happened and why people must": which has something to recommend it. Or, presented *tout court*, "If men study poetry which is too romantic, it may lead to sadness at the end": a concealed plea for didactic verse, possibly, in which the Thais are more at home. The following cavalier summary is partly the result of the teacher's attempt to keep up with a monstrous syllabus: "After Caedmon we came to Edmund Chaucer, he was famous in poetic arts. Later Pier and Plowman tried to change some of the poetry." (These three specimens come from Third Year papers.)

UNLIKE other Eastern people, the Thais do not have very much time for poetry. Technological achievement is what they admire. It is true that literature preserves a certain snob value, as in the West, but far less than in Japan. The Thais turn their faces emphatically away from the sweaty spectacle of Western *Angst*: at the other extreme the Japanese revel in it, with or without the benefit of "objective correlative," sport in it as the fish in the water. What a silly man Antony was! says the Thai student, further complaining that the play hasn't even got a ghost in it, for a good ghost of a plain, unsymbolic sort is what they most enjoy. And so, when pressed to offer some justification for poetry, they may concede that "Poetry makes the world, the nature, have more technique colours than it really was." Or, eager to assure the examiner of their devotion to the subject he has been teaching, the utmost they can propose is: "I like to read poems as much as sleeping." This is enlarged in a comment on "Weep you no more, sad fountains": "I approve of his thought that sleep is the best time in the life. After sleep we seem fresh, unless we are dozing and want to sleep again." This rings with sincerity: it is the "melting bowels" of more excitable races. For the Thais are deeply in love with sleep: they yearn for it the way we yearn for power, wealth, or love. A medical friend told me that, despite the commonness of the practice, opium smoking was not a social problem here for the simple reason that the addict behaved much like anyone else: he slept.

The foregoing specimens may have suggested a further Thai characteristic: honesty, lack of pretence. Unlike the Japanese, for whom *Tiefe* is *de rigueur*, they are always ready to admit that they do not understand. Too ready, in fact: educationally they appear to be spoon-fed till an advanced age. "When I read poetry my head soon becomes hurting." And during a recent oral examination the following interchange is reported to have taken place (I cannot vouch for it myself, but it sounds authentic):

EXAMINER: And what does your father do?
MALE STUDENT: He grows opium.
EXAMINER: Then he must be a rich man.
MALE STUDENT (in momentary but honest indignation): No no, sir—the police take half of everything!

If "face" is still important in Thailand, then many Thais give the impression of having seen through it. Again, unlike the Japanese: but the Thai sense of humour (outside the sacred ground of Buddhism and the monarchy) is robust in the extreme, altogether dissimilar from the painful rarefied wit of the Japanese. The snobbery that attaches to titles is kept within bounds by the sheer number of titles; and the only snobbery to be noticed in students lies in their indignant repudiation of any admixture of Chinese blood: "I am pure Thai, sir!" But this, which is often untrue, is only a small and comprehensible measure of self-defence against a suspicious world. Taxi-dancers, on the contrary, are ready to exploit their Chinese blood. But that is for the sake of the *cheongsam* and the glitter of flesh and sophistication which it affords.

Together with this honesty, however, go considerable tact and politeness. The desire to please, prevalent among students of all nationalities around examination time, achieves extra refinements here. An essay on

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The Place of Literature in the Modern World began thus: "The place of literature in the modern world I am sure is England." This trait, allied with astuteness, makes the Thais happier diplomats than are the Japanese:

"Mr. Serubin, Assistant Soviet Foreign Minister, on a short visit here, called on Prime Minister Tanom Kittikachorn and extended an invitation for him to visit his country.

Lieut.-General Tanom reported to newsmen to-day that the Foreign Minister placed a map of Russia before him and said that Russia is a beautiful country and Thailand's Prime Minister should make a visit there.

Asked what reply he gave, the Prime Minister said: 'I told him I have just come into office and must first visit all of Thailand.'

Asked if he would visit Russia after he had visited all of Thailand, he said: 'Then I must visit our nearest neighbours.'

Asked if he would visit Russia after visiting the nearest neighbouring countries, he said: 'I must then visit the next nearest neighbours.'"*

HAVING become thoroughly depressed after a hundred or so oral examinations, with their reiterated "When I am graduated I shall be a teacher" and "My pastime is to grow flowers," I allowed my feelings to be known. The next morning a young lady rushed into the room, displaying all the outward signs of extreme agitation. "My brother has been bitten by a mad dog!" she gasped. After several minutes of graphic description of the slavering dog and her father's alarm and of condolences on my part, it transpired that the biting had occurred some months previously. She got a good mark, nonetheless, as did another candidate who bounced in a little later, exclaiming how very glad she was to see me. For the previous night she had dreamt that I came to her bedside, dressed in a long white robe and bleeding profusely, and complained that I was the ghost of Banquo, requiring revenge. She was careful to explain that she had just been revising the set play—so thoroughly, in fact, that she had fallen asleep over it.

Less pleasing, perhaps, is the appeal to pity, which ranges across the East, from the abrupt "You are my father, sir. You will please pay my school fees" of an Egyptian lately engaged in burning down the Faculty, to the more pathetic footnote of a Thai male of twenty-two years or more, "Sir! I can't remember it. I have been ill of asthma since I took my final examination. I am a repeater, pity on me, please—if I fail, I will be retired. Excuse me, a sicky boy." It is true that the Japanese occasionally relapse into the "sicky boy" act, but in their case it is due to a fascinated interest in unhealthiness rather than the hope of gain. They are too proud to beg, except for knowledge. The Thais, however, are entirely free from the Japanese masochism, from that persistent itch to convince themselves (themselves rather than other people) that they are either better or worse than other people. The Thais in general are an unselfconscious people, cosily rooted in the heavy soil of Buddhist ethics, graceful sloth, a childlike cheerfulness, and an unchildish commonsense. It is true that the touristic appellation "Land of Smiles" needs some qualification, for there is a good deal of poverty in the country, much dissatisfaction with domestic politics, and a feeling on the part of some educated people that the country is too small, cannot make use of them. Yet, if the Thais are dissatisfied, they do know why—and they know what would satisfy them: their desires are down to earth. Whereas the Japanese are thoroughgoing romantics, yearning for they know not what, connoisseurs of idle tears and putatively divine despairs.

IN conclusion, and not without a feeling that I ought to feel ashamed of myself, I quote from a letter written to my wife by a Japanese student who used to attend her lectures on French literature.

"... I often remember of you especially when I am alone in the sun but somehow I have been unable to find time to write to you.... I cannot help to remember your visages in the room where I could see the trees and the roofs in the weakened lovely sunshine outside...."

"Alone in the sun" sounds ominously like something out of one of those Hollywood

* *Bangkok Post*, March 3, 1958.

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highbrow literary youth-movements, but the modulation into "weakened lovely sunshine" is reassuring and splendidly Japanese in its preference. This is what *shibui* means: astringent, austere, chaste, simple yet refined, in perfect taste. There is something vulgar about a blaze of sunshine.

"Cet après midi je suis allé me promener dans les champs. Wandering here and there according to various perfumes of roses, I sat under an oak tree, saw the sea forward, and sighed profoundly to gaze the sky. Scaders were singing backward. I was waiting for midges to bite me, before abandoning the glory of the afternoon. . . ."

"Les champs" may not exist, literally (you cannot promenade in paddyfields), and one may doubt those roses. But the sigh was surely real: this is what the Japanese call *aware*, the sense of trivial sadness, the "ah-ness of things." "Scaders" are simply cicadas: fairly conventional poetic apparatus, in spite of being remarkably noisy creatures, not unlike Western poets. Even so, they were not singing backwards, but merely behind him. There is a touch of genuine imagination in the reference to the midges, and a feeling for form, which is much stronger in Japanese poetry than is content.

"Madame. These bygone experiences should be all fading out just like a dream which is of no use. Few days ago I had a sweet dream. I often wonder the experience in the wakeness, is it any better than the dream? Qui sait, de la tension laborieuse de la semaine ou du repos vivifant du sabbat, lequel est le plus important pour l'homme et le plus fécond?"

Japanese literature is full of such questionings. They are not meant to be answered: that would be rather vulgar. A good example among recently translated novels of this Japanese inconclusiveness—the spiritual dot-dot-dot at the end—is Junichirō Tanizaki's *Some Prefer Nettles*. Just as Osamu Dazai's *The Setting Sun*, alas, is an example of the cult of sickliness, there pepped up with quotations from the Western sages.

"Do you laugh at such a dreamy boy as I? The true form or the essence, I seek for, and not dreamy things. These days I am interested in John Galsworthy and study on him. I intend to compose a thesis entitling 'Galsworthy and His Dogs.'"

If that strikes us as something of an anti-climax we should not, under the circumstances, complain. The Japanese are not critics but rather eclectic hunters: a staunch disciple of Eliot may at any moment fall with rapacity upon some minor Georgian.

"PS. I produced suddenly the following lines in the classroom on a day in November last. The neighbouring student laughed at me to the doggerel saying that I was a dreamy fellow.

LONGING FOR THAT VILLAGE

A cloudy afternoon it was
Suddenly wet it became
A poor traveller I was
And God brought me a maid
Who told me my route
A shower passed by, taking her
Who and what she's I wonder."

No letter is complete without a poem. This, in more orthodox English, could be found in any of the recent anthologies of Japanese literature in translation and could come from almost any period. The natural setting and the weather: the sense of rootlessness and dispossession ("a poor traveller"): the tinge of self-pity: the sudden apparition of the "maid" (note that the poet does not do anything so precise as falling in love with her): and the final question, so casually dropped and yet—obviously—presumably—so important. Anyone else would have asked the girl who and what she was. Anyone but a Japanese poet: for him, not-knowing is far more interesting than mere knowing.

SOMEONE once warned me, "You can't go on writing about universities for ever!" Why not? It's there that history is in the making, and it is when it is in the making that history requires attention: it doesn't seem to be much use to us afterwards. It is in the classroom that this new empire, splendid and miserable and very large, is taking shape. Though whether we really need such big reasons for keeping our eyes and understanding as open as we can—well, that is a different question. . . .

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Gabriele D'Annunzio

The Poet as Superman — By Anthony Rhodes

MOST English people think of D'Annunzio as a belated Swinburne or Oscar Wilde in Abruzzese folk-garb—or alternatively, as the lover of the Duse. He is known as a man who delighted in elegant clothes and exotic scents, who wrote rather bad satanic novels, and used to ride stark naked every morning on his sorrel into the Adriatic (from where he would swim ashore to his "friend," the great actress, who would be waiting, holding a purple mantle, to receive him). To the English—even to the few who have read any of his books, or heard of his exploit at Fiume—he is little more than a piece of extravaganza.

Yet as the title of one biography *D'Annunzio, John the Baptist of Fascism*, suggests, there is more to him than that. He is the only Italian writer since Dante and Machiavelli whose influence has been extended (through Fascism) all over Europe and the world. He took the violence of Nietzsche and latinised it—as early as 1890. In this sense, he is the creator of Mussolini and a host of petty Latin dictators who are still with us. In one of his first novels, *Il Trionfo della Morte*, he wrote: "A state erected on the basis of popular suffrage and equality in voting is not only precarious, it is ignoble. The state should always be no more than an institution for favouring the gradual elevation of a privileged class towards its ideal form of existence." And his early books are full of phrases such as, "... I am grateful to my ancestors, an ancient and noble race of warriors, for having given me their rich and fiery blood, for the beautiful women they raped, for all their victories, their drunkenness, their magnificence." These stories are all about beautiful women being hideously mutilated, lovers fornicating as they throw themselves to death over cliffs, school-mistresses being raped by drunken water-carriers. His most famous play, *La Figlia di Jorio*, opens on a village piazza, with a dishevelled woman being chased by a mob of drunken reapers, intoxicated with the sun, wine, and carnal desire.

All this was most attractive to the youth of Italy after 1900, tired of the "bourgeois century" with its unadventurous, security-seeking, property-worshipping ideals. D'Annunzio's work suddenly opened up to them (in Borghese's words) "vistas of splendid tyrannies, famous courtesans, measureless voyages, lightning conquests, and the ravished daughters of barbarian kings." His was the first violent reaction against Victorianism.

Bravura, says the dictionary, means "brilliant or ambitious execution, forced display." D'Annunzio, when he came to Rome in 1882, was aged nineteen, a poor provincial from the Abruzzi, which is one of the most primitive parts of Italy; but he already had plenty of *bravura*. Within two years, he had been accepted by Roman society, had entered all the *palazzi*, and had married the daughter of the Duke of Gallese. The extraordinary fascination this man exercised over women is described by Isadora Duncan, who wrote: "Perhaps the most remarkable lover of our times is Gabriele D'Annunzio —and this notwithstanding that he is small and, except when his face lights up with enthusiasm, positively ugly. When he speaks to a woman he likes, his face is transfigured, so that he suddenly seems to be Apollo. And the effect on the woman is equally remarkable. She feels suddenly that her very soul and being are lifted, as it were, into an ethereal region, where she walks in company with the Divine Beatrice...." This *bravura* was to be repeated in different spheres all his life—until at the end, he held up powerful governments at the pistol-point, mesmerised generals, ruled a city-state single-handed for fifteen months, and publicly announced to the world that he had "pulled the beards of three old idiots." The year was 1919, and the "three old idiots" were Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George.

D'ANNUNZIO spent his first years in Rome working on a newspaper, or writing novels at Francaville-mare, generally in the company of a lady of the aristocracy. After six years of this, he had such an indigestion of Duchesses —of Duchesses or adventuresses (he occasionally mistook the one for the other)—that he took to living with a *bourgeoise*, Barbara Leone.

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He probably did not conquer as many authentic Princesses, Duchesses, and Marchionesses as he attributes in his first novel, *Il Piacere*, to the autobiographical hero, Andrea Sperelli. To seduce these great ladies with their varied appetites, he lacked two of the many charms he so generously attributed to Sperelli—a great name and a great fortune. In spite of this, he easily debauched the Princess Gravina and detached her from Vittorio Emmanuele, the heir to the Italian throne. He had several children by this lady, and was condemned to prison for adultery (then a criminal offence in Naples).* He is perhaps the first "publicity" writer of our times, aware, like Lord Beaverbrook, that "bad publicity is better than no publicity." All this went with an astonishing literary fertility. During this first period, he produced ten novels, eight plays, and over 10,000 lines of epic poetry—one of his poems being longer than the three parts of Dante's *Divine Comedy* put together.

The theme of his novels—which are all autobiographical—is that every sin committed for the sake of Beauty, particularly if it is carnal, is excusable. He developed a kind of Paterian Cult of the Beautiful, adding to it a special brand of his own, a Machiavellianism of Beauty. Just as Machiavelli exalted Cesare Borgia into a superman in spite of his crimes, so D'Annunzio exalts his heroes who, in order to live their life of Beauty, do not hesitate to commit sins, including the special Dannunzian one of incest—as, for instance, in *La Città Morta*, where a respectable archæologist is torn between his desire to unearth antiquities and to rape his sister in the ruins of Mycenae.

Violence is generally used by a dramatist as the culminating point towards which his action tends. But in D'Annunzio's plays, violence is not a culminating point. It is the continual state in which his characters live. One of them says, "... from far, far away came that torbid burning inside him, from his most remote origins, from a primitive bestiality, from the ancient mystery of libidinous desires...." This "ancient mystery of libidinous desires" is not just a piece of rhetoric. It describes perfectly D'Annunzio's native patrimony. For with all his elegance and acquired Roman urbanity, he always remained an Abruzzese, the son of a semi-primitive people. Coming into contact with the sophisticated world of Rome, he absorbed it rapidly, summarily, and with inevitable dissonances—from which come the brutal elements in his work. The idea of sexual violence belongs equally to the barbarian and the decadent. For both the extremely barbarous and the extremely civilised are cruel—the first by instinct, the second by a kind of mental erethism, employing cruelty in love as the French do—a kind of stimulus to desire. *Des Esseintes* is the classic example. The lack of humanity in D'Annunzio's work comes from this, that he was at once a barbarian and a decadent. This explains, too, why he was later to prove himself a warrior. Most people expect a voluptuary, an intellectual, and a decadent, to be a poor soldier with unreliable nerves. This was far from the case with D'Annunzio.

IN HIS poetry, he soon began to show how easily sensual decadence can turn into military violence. Early "satanic" poems like *Ora Satanica*:

No longer do I crave the sweetness of ideal romance,
The softness of the apple and the milk, nor songs
And gentle carols 'mid the flowers and soft west wind;
No longer nemean games and girls and languid notes;
No, Satan, 'tis you I crave beneath your brazen wing,
To stand beside me and to fill me with your ill.
I long for madness that prostrates the soul and sense,
While hymns of evil fill the priests with fear;
I crave infernal dances and insensate sounds,
The breasts of Grecian concubines to pass the night,
I crave long orgies and strange unknown forms of love.
Among the kisses and the wine-cups will I madden—
Satan, yes, 'tis you I love....

These poems become in the epic poetry:

There may you one day see the Latin sea
All covered with battles for your war,
And for your brow, laurels and myrtles interwoven.
Oh, ever-born, oh, flower of all the races,
Aroma of all the earth, Italy, Italy, sacred to the
New dawn, with the plough and the prow.

The phrase *mare nostrum* appears for the first time in his poetry after 1900, when he wrote a verse play called *La Nave*, which was a violent celebration of the Venetian past, and a call to present Italian action, with the celebrated slogan, "Arm the prow and sail against the world." (Such was the feeling of chauvinism infused into this play, that during the rehearsals the actors themselves became penetrated with its factious spirit, of struggle, hate, and vendetta; they were in such a state of nervous

* The sentence was not enforced.

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excitement that at every moment on the stage there were outbreaks of quarrels, shrieks, and people coming to blows.)

Another "decadent" play, but with the odour of violence already about it, was *La Città Morta*, which deals with murder and incest in the ruins of Mycenae. Only to read a few pages of this play is to be overcome with a vague sense of malady which, as the play proceeds, becomes more and more oppressive and insupportable. A brother who adores and worships his sister as something almost sacred, is suddenly shaken with a hideous passion to mix his blood with her's. However much he fights against this temptation, he fails, until he decides to murder her. "I do not know," says one of D'Annunzio's characters, "which is pleasanter—to spill sperm or to spill blood." In this play, we seem to be in the solitude of an unknown desert, where the sun burns and there is no consolation of water or shade. All around are uncovered tombs, from which death exhales in the form of an invisible vapour. And the people who inhabit this silent and solitary place seem poisoned too.

Not all his plays were unqualified successes. Another very patriotic play, *Francesca di Rimini*, was a complete fiasco because D'Annunzio, ever in search of novel effects, insisted that a genuine bombardment with catapults for the mediæval siege should be enacted; and a large stone completely demolished one of the walls of the stage. A thick, choking smoke, which a chemist friend had assured D'Annunzio would give the appearance of gun-powder fumes, blinded and asphyxiated the spectators, who all left the theatre not hissing but howling. It is said to have been a night unique in the annals of the theatre.

WHEN D'Annunzio was working on these plays, he became almost savage himself. He confesses how he worked: "... always something carnal, akin to carnal violence, a mixture of ferocity and drunkenness accompanies the act of generation in my brain.... When the sparks fly from me, I feel the thick stuff of which I am made. My whole being is in commotion, aroused to the extent that there is no wild heart-beat or instinct which does not seem to rise from the depths within me...."

D'Annunzio's plays are based on brutal and savage forces, uncontrollable instincts and irrational impulses. He deliberately chose barbaric periods of history when, in the general civil, social, and moral disorder, with the absence of a proper legal system, men behave like savages —pre-Homeric Greece, Rome in the Dark Ages, the primitive Abruzzi, the first Christian martyrs. For savages are not subject to moral restrictions; they recognise no control of their behaviour, save greater force. Their actions are anti-social, egotistic, without pity or any notion of defence of the weak, or chivalrous love. Conquest, rapacious desire for women, possession, domination—these are the feelings D'Annunzio depicts in his dramas.

During this period he ran through a whole series of women himself, like some feudal *gran signor*. He lived in a large house outside Florence, filled with priceless works of art, where his attitude to women was simply that of a *condottiere*. Of Eleonora Duse, who spent four years with him here, he said: "The more the thing a man possesses awakens envy and cupidity in other men, the more that man enjoys it. Herein lies the attraction of the ladies of the stage." He wished he had possessed the actress, "after one of her stage successes, when she was still hot from the breath of the crowd."

The Duse was followed by a kind of Amazon, the Princess Alessandra di Rudinì. This tempestuous lady was the most masculine of his loves, a foot taller than the poet, wearing a man's riding-habit and top-boots. She cracked her whip like a huntsman, to the great scandal of the more modestly skirted female riders. She was also a morphinomaniac. He later became involved with another violent lady, a Russian, Natalia Victor de Goloubeff, who wanted to live with him for ever, in a remote villa near Arcachon in France. Of her he said, "She was mad, with the blackest of black Slavonic madness." While with her, he wrote a play called *La Mort Parfumée*, about a whore who is smothered to death in a bed of rose-petals.

Not content with intense literary production and innumerable love affairs, D'Annunzio also entered Parliament, where his violent personality was a powerful purgative, galvanising the sleepy members. He challenged several of them to duels. He started on the extreme Right, but soon moved to the extreme Left. He also began to fly aeroplanes, and is said to have been the first Italian to loop the loop. At this point he suddenly went bankrupt for several million lire, and had to retire to France, where he lived until 1915, when he put his *bravura* into action.

AFTER D'Annunzio's death, a book called *Les Deux Masques* by a Frenchman, Paul Saint-Victor, was found in his library. It had been carefully annotated by D'Annunzio, with many passages underlined, including a most revelatory one about the poet Aeschylus, the author of seventy plays—*"who also fought at Marathon."* Other passages underlined all show Aeschylus as the soldier rather than the writer, with particular reference to the wound he received at Marathon and the epitaph he wrote for

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himself, in which he commemorates his military rather than his poetic prowess.

When the war broke out, D'Annunzio was fifty-two, and had he stayed writing plays in France (where he had gone to escape his creditors), no one would have blamed him. But he immediately returned to Italy and volunteered for service. In those days, it was easy to make war sound glamorous, and D'Annunzio's literary imagination was inflamed by new inventions such as the aeroplane and the torpedo-boat. The crowds who collected round his hotel in Rome in 1915 were harangued into the war by his speeches: "... And these men in the new torpedo-boats will go forward at the great enemy vessel under an incessant hail of bullets from machine-guns capable of firing two hundred bullets a minute. They will advance to within 400 metres and launch their first torpedo—their second! And no joy can equal theirs when they see the monstrous enemy ironclad on its side, the muzzles of its guns pointing futilely to the skies—and then suddenly sink with all its turrets and batteries in a vast, measureless vortex...." Then he would attack the Italian government, who were hesitating to declare war on Germany, "Your blood must cry out within you for war! Rebellion must roar within you! With the stick and the punch, with the kick and the blow, we will protect ourselves against the littleness of these lickers of Prussian boots... I tell you, there is a stink of treason here, in Rome! We Italians are being sold like cattle!..."

"No! No!" roared the crowd. "It shall not be! Death to the traitors! War! War!"

He was officially an officer in the Army, but he adopted on his own authority a naval title, *Comandante*. He fought in the air, on the land, on the sea, being finally decorated with one gold medal, five silver ones, a bronze medal, and the Officer's Cross of the Savoy Military Order, not to mention a host of foreign decorations, including the English Military Cross. His war career is like that of one of those paladins in Ariosto's poem, whose whereabouts remained unknown to the Emperor Charlemagne himself, although they were doing doughty deeds for him. He delighted in a kind of individual enterprise of his own, in which, together with some chosen Ulyssean companions in a motor-boat, he would glide into an Austrian harbour by night, and fire off torpedoes; or in an aeroplane, he would fly over Austrian cities dropping, instead of high-explosive, hundreds of leaflets couched in his own high-sounding prose. On the Adriatic city of Zara, he dropped the pamphlet, "Oh, Zara! Zara! For your Venetian grace, for all your Italian beauty, believe in the Promise, believe in the Joy of your second Spring to come, when the Corinthian acanthus shall flower again around your Latin columns, and the Lion of St. Mark above your doors will roar again at our entry...." He was already alluding to his biggest feat of *bravura*, which was to take place nearly a year after the end of the war, when, single-handed, he invaded one of these Adriatic cities, the port of Fiume.

The Allies at Versailles could not decide what to do with this place, so D'Annunzio presented them, and "the pusillanimous Italian government," with a *fait accompli*. In this, he had behind him all the avant-garde youth of the time, together with intellectuals like Marinetti, who addressed obscene and threatening insults to the Italian Prime Minister from the columns of the popular press—and aviators, like Keller, who parachuted a chamber-pot full of carrots

D'Annunzio in "Fifty Caricatures" by Max Beerbohm

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on to the Parliament buildings. Soldiers after a war always remember the advantages of military life—the regular salary, the jolly companionship, the songs, the stars on the sleeves, the gun at the belt, the feeling of Power. Fascism was in the air. Benito Mussolini, then editor of the *Popolo d'Italia*, announced, "All the great family of the Italian people support you with impetuous faith, undying admiration, and unending sympathy." D'Annunzio replied, "My thanks to you and your comrades. I am ready. We are ready. All are ready. The greatest battle is about to begin. I tell you, we shall have the Fifteenth Victory! . . ."

THE actual seizure of Fiume was less an act of *bravura* than a piece of *opera buffa*. On the operatic stage of any country such a scene would seem perfectly reasonable. Only in Italy could it happen in real life.

At 11 o'clock on the morning of the 12th September, 1919, General Pittaluga, an Italian, but the Allied military governor of Fiume, was woken, and informed that an armed band of 1,000 men under the poet D'Annunzio had arrived to occupy his city. He immediately hurried with his troops to the city boundaries, where a stormy meeting took place between the two men.

"Poet!" exclaimed the General. "You will be the ruin of Italy if you do this."

"General!" replied the poet. "It is *you* who will be the ruin of Italy—if you withstand fate, and become the accomplice to a deed of infamy. I, Gabriele D'Annunzio, declare this city Italian. *Viva Fiume Italiana!*" He added that the General, as an Italian, should appreciate this. The General replied that he was in Fiume not as an Italian, but as an Allied general. He had orders and he would carry them out. He ordered his men to cock their rifles.

"In that case," said D'Annunzio, "you will have to fire on my soldiers, who are the brothers of your soldiers. If you must do so"—he opened his greatcoat, revealing all his medals—"fire first on this!"

The General, we are told, remained stunned for nearly a minute, at this patriotic reply. Then his Italian blood rose, tears came into his eyes. He began talking quickly as Figaro, swore classical oaths, and gripped the rebel's hand. "Great poet!" he cried. "I do not wish to be the cause of spilling Italian blood. I am honoured to meet you for the first time. May your dream be fulfilled! May I, too, soon shout with you, *Viva Fiume Italiana!*"

"Viva Fiume Italiana!" cried the poet.

"Viva Fiume Italiana!" cried the soldiers.

The two men embraced and went into the town together. And that evening, the inhabitants of Fiume witnessed the astonishing spectacle in the Governor's Palace of the simultaneous arrival of a general entrusted with a command of a strategic area, and a lieut.-colonel who threatened that area, both on the best of terms, responding in a series of glasses of vermouth to the repeated toast, *Viva Fiume Italiana!*

In this way began the "Fiume episode," one of those peculiar brands of Italian heroism, half tight-rope walking, half grand opera, with the nations of Europe all silent and admiring in the audience. For the Great Powers in Versailles were so bewildered by the act—which had apparently been carried out against the orders of the Italian government—that they ordered their contingents to leave the city, to avoid bloodshed. The population of Fiume, on their knees in the piazza, then witnessed D'Annunzio's formal act of occupation, when he kissed the Italian tricolour and declared Fiume Italian.

When, within a month, no one had come to unseat him, D'Annunzio became intoxicated with his power. He gave himself the title, *Commandante*, at the top of the pyramid; then came his Chief of Cabinet; then the Foreign Minister, who sent telegrams and corresponded directly with Rome, Versailles, and the Allies. A Tribunal of Justice was set up under a former cavalry officer. There was a Minister of War, of Health, a Minister of Public Prosecution; and an attempt was made at instituting what we would call a Home Office. But as the police of Fiume were largely Hungarian, and many administrative employees were Austrian, it was found better to leave the preservation of law and order to D'Annunzio's soldiers. After a few weeks, they had designed a special uniform for themselves—black shirts with something Garibaldean about them, skulls and cross-bones insignia; they all carried daggers. They also invented a new salute—the raised right arm, chosen from among the many gestures of Graeco-Roman orators. It was clearly superior to the humble bow or bourgeois handshake, its limit seemed the sky, and at the same time it seemed, symbolically, to thrust a dagger into the throat of an invisible enemy. Fascism was born.

THERE is a poem by Carducci in which he celebrates the virtues of a tiny Italian commune in the Middle Ages, where the General Assemblies of its Parliament were public, held out of doors. The Consul presided, promulgating the laws, allotting fields and pastures, encouraging the shepherds to become soldiers in a just defensive war, "whenever the Hun or Slav is at the gate." "In the name of Christ and Mary," he would say, "I order you to take this

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action." Raising their right hands, the people would signify their approval of his decisions for the common benefit. This ancient state now came alive again for fifteen months, in 20th-century Fiume.

The people would gather daily in the piazza beneath the palace of the Government, and D'Annunzio in his bemedalled uniform would appear on the balcony surrounded by his staff, to deliver a harangue. Raising their right arms, the people would show their approval with the cry, *"Aia! Aia! Alala!"* (with which, D'Annunzio had taught them, Achilles used to spur his horses).

D'Annunzio would then say, "To whom, Fiume?"

The unanimous cry would be, "To us, Fiume!"

He would then change from the belligerent tone to a soft, tender, almost caressing note, in Venetian dialect, *"Vu con mi, Mi con vu!"*

'You with us! We with you! *Aia! Aai! Aia! Alala!"* they would shriek.

"Is there any man among you who doubts my faith?" he would cry to the Legionaries.

One sole cry would go up from the Legionaries, "No! Never!"

"Is there any man among you who doubts my loyalty?"

"No! Never!"

"Is there any man among you who doubts that you are my brothers, whom I am worthy to lead?"

"No! Never!"

Then he would shout, "We no longer hope. We wish! Do you understand? We wish! Repeat that word!"

All the soldiers would cry, "We wish!"

What did they wish? It is doubtful if D'Annunzio knew himself. As the months passed, his ideas became more and more chimerical. He announced to the world that, against the "British League of Nations," he was founding an Anti-League of Nations, a "Fiuman League of Nations"; and he wrote a letter on the subject to Sir Eric Drummond, the general secretary of the League of Nations, informing him that henceforth "Fiume would be a symbol of the sacred crusade against England." (This letter received no reply, although both Lloyd George and Lord Curzon later referred to it in public speeches.) So hysterical had his language become that, to someone who happened to say, "We have now been here two months," he said indignantly, "That is not so! We have been here sixty days of passion, and sixty nights of anguish!"

Mussolini, meanwhile, should have approved of everything in Fiume; the *coup de main*, the uniforms, the chauvinism, the mob oratory, the mysticism. He had been the first public man to open a pro-Fiume subscription in his newspaper, *Popolo d'Italia*; and he had offered at the beginning to take all the babies away, in case fighting broke out (a project which proved easier to conceive than execute). But after a few months in Fiume, D'Annunzio began to display disquieting political symptoms.

It is only to-day, twelve years after Mussolini's death, that documents have been made public which reveal how Mussolini really behaved over Fiume, and of the mutual distrust of the two men who, we were told, were such firm friends. While Mussolini, a natural revolutionary and a radical socialist, was moving slowly Right, until his party became identified with the reaction of the monied classes, D'Annunzio, a natural aristocrat and monarchist, was moving steadily Left, until he was seriously feared as a kind of Russian Bolshevic.* Every day, more egalitarian ideas appeared in Fiume, clothed in his ornate language—about mediæval guilds and eternal brotherhood, and the "Power of Productive Labour." There are phrases in the Constitution of Fiume, which he now drew up, such as, "the sole lawful claim to dominion over any means of production and exchange is Labour"; "Labour alone is master of the product"; "only constant producers of the common wealth and constant creators of the common power are real citizens of the Republic of Fiume"; "the republic will not recognise ownership as the absolute domination of the person over the thing...." It is not surprising that the government in Rome now took heart, realising that it would not be long before public opinion, which had been sympathetic to D'Annunzio, would turn against him.

Mussolini was too astute a politician to continue supporting D'Annunzio, when his "Bolshevism" became widely known in Italy. He had learned that socialism of the Communist brand would never be acceptable to the property-loving Italian people. He also believed that D'Annunzio had gone mad. The result was that when, at Christmas, 1920, the Italian government decided to eject D'Annunzio by force, D'Annunzio did not obtain the support he had expected from the growing Fascist movement. (Mussolini also feared that D'Annunzio, if successful, might lead the "March on Rome," which he intended to lead himself.)

* These documents are in the Library of the Vittoriale. They have been analysed by Nino Valeri in *Da Giolitti a Mussolini* (Parenti. 1956). Further information on the last days in Fiume has just been made available in Foscanelli's *D'Annunzio e l'ora sociale*. Foscanelli, who was in Fiume with D'Annunzio, had to keep silent during the Fascist period.

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Yet *bravura* was, to the very end, the quality he displayed. In *Italia per gli Italiani*, he says that, after three of his men had been buried beneath the débris during the naval bombardment of Fiume, suddenly all the balconies of the houses looking on to the sea opened, and "women came forth holding their babies, whom they pulled from their breasts crying, 'This one, Italy! Take this one! But not *Him*!'" He still saw himself as the Saviour. Fighting, with some severe naval shelling, took place for three days, during what D'Annunzio characteristically called "The Christmas of Blood." When it was clear that no help was coming from the Fascists, D'Annunzio admitted defeat, and yielded up the city he had governed for fifteen months to the Italian troops. It was the end of the autocratic, oratorical republic of Fiume.

IN HIS last days, D'Annunzio lived in a palace on Lake Garda, which Mussolini gave him, to keep him out of mischief. He lived here like a captive Pope, despatching envoys to foreign parts and issuing encyclicals. The slopes and dales around the house, the rivulets and groves, were hallowed with the personal emblems of his poetic and martial past. A discarded battleship was somehow hoisted to a hilltop. The aeroplane in which he had flown over Vienna during the war, showering that city with pamphlets, hung in one of the larger rooms. Guns, swords, and pistols jostled manuscripts of lyrical, sacred, and profane poetry. Books of devotion on tables and lecterns were set beside lewd prints. A model of Michelangelo's David was given a small skirt. Often, the poet would conceal himself for days in his library, in poetic composition, and then suddenly emerge at dinner in full military attire, like Ibsen's Borkmann in the formal clothes of better days. Towards the end, with the presentiment of death upon him, he spent one night a month in a coffin. He died on the 1st March, 1938.

At the end of his life, D'Annunzio wrote: "I have always lived and acted dangerously—since my childhood. Because my mother denied me a fruit I wanted at the table, I plunged my knife into my own flank. If blood flowed, tears did not. With advancing years, my courage increased. In the age of the slipper and the armchair, I chose the cockpit of the aeroplane. Where lay the undareable, I dared. I looked death in the face with one eye—as I had with two. I was the first at Pola, at Cataro, at Vienna. I was at Veliki, Faiti, and Timavo. I fought on the sea and beneath the sea. In the night of Buccari, I swore to myself that I would save Fiume. In the night of Ronchi, I fulfilled that oath."

It is difficult for an Englishman to understand this form of boasting. We do not appreciate what the Latins call *se faire valoir*—to let people see your good qualities, not to hide your light. The English believe that the more a man does this, the greater is his inferiority complex, due to lack of achievement—a disingenuous explanation suitable to our national mentality. But the Latin thinks that the man who hasn't a high opinion of himself (and does not let others know that opinion) has nothing.

To us to-day, who have seen and experienced the modern barbarisms, Hitler, Mussolini, Dachau, Buchenwald, and so forth, there is nothing very original in D'Annunzio's satanism, his boasting, or his violence. But in D'Annunzio's heyday, Victorianism was still alive, and people refused to recognise the idea that evil might, and could, prevail. When Hitler appeared not long before D'Annunzio's death and openly announced his plans, such people were like cultivated travellers confronted by a ghost; they refused to believe it existed. To such a generation, D'Annunzio's work came as something quite new and original, and he was the most widely read author in Europe. In his life, as in his work, he is the link between the languors of the Victorian *fin de siècle*, and the mechanised, broadcasting, sky-spanning, quick-as-lightning violence of our own days.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Shadows, Heroes, Hungarians

CONFRONTED, as a Hungarian, with the drama of events in one's own country while watching the performance of *Shadow of Heroes* by Mr. Robert Ardrey (at the Piccadilly Theatre, London), I feel I should first and foremost report on how true I felt the picture to be. Curiously enough, it seemed to me to be so much more genuine and accurate than the British audience, or at any rate most of the London critics, took it to be. Is this paradoxical? Mr. Ardrey had never been in Hungary and had never seen the Communist leaders whom he puts on the stage under their own names. (The Lord Chamberlain, I understand, grumbled, but did not object.) But he has apparently taken enormous pains to remain faithful to the recorded facts—and to inform the audience, through his Narrator (Mr. Emlyn Williams), whenever he needed to bridge some situation with a fictional bit or two. He has not escaped some minor errors and over-simplifications. Surely this is excusable. Should a non-Hungarian audience even bother about this? For us Hungarians, it is awkward to see, for instance, the economic dictator of Stalinist Hungary, Ernö Gerö, transformed from the sour and dyspeptic Stakhanovite of bureaucratism and statistical demagogy (which we all knew him to be) into a dandified and frivolous political playboy. It is I, or we, who should be disturbed by such contrasts between life and theatre. It is I, or we, who should be reluctant to accept the sand-coloured screens pushed to and fro on the stage as sufficient to represent the Budapest scenery, and who should find the English accents and mispronunciations somewhat trying. All the same, it is for us to vouch, *vis-à-vis* audiences far from the Danube, for the truthfulness of the story. How is it that so many commentators find it incredible? It was all in the newspapers, it is all recorded in the documents and history books. Apparently, art may imitate life, but only at its own risk when life itself is so lurid and melodramatic.

Astounding, and therefore unbelievable is, I gather, the drama of the historic relationship between the present-day leader of Communist Hungary, János Kádár, and his most intimate friends, László and Julia Rajk. They worked together in the underground movement, and they suffered fascist persecution together. They acted together as leading Communists in the Stalin era. One day Kádár, as Minister of the Interior, did find himself instrumental in having arrested, maltreated, and murdered his former leader whom he knew to be innocent. He went to see Rajk in prison to persuade him that his hanging would be merely a formality; and subsequently he went to see him on the scaffold where his hanging was a reality. Years passed. Kádár himself had been imprisoned and badly maltreated; he, as well as Julia Rajk, was subsequently released. Now he was able to go and see Julia, to unburden his guilt-ridden soul. For a while they both appeared in the front-line of Hungarian politics, among those Communists who joined or, like Imre Nagy, led the Hungarian fight for freedom. The revolution was short-lived. Kádár took over responsibility for the restoration of the Soviet dictatorship in Hungary—responsibility, too, for violating the safe-conduct granted to Imre Nagy and Julia Rajk, for their treacherous abduction, and finally for the murder of Imre Nagy and the indefinite detention, no one knows where, of László Rajk's widow.

I suppose I must agree: this is too much horror for one evening in the theatre. I can only regret that the honest, and often ingenious, efforts of the author to make reality believable should not have met (at any rate in London) with the success they deserve. Factual scrupulousness is one thing, but perhaps, alas, melodrama has need of melodramatic techniques. Would more fiction and less history have served the truth better? I wonder. The strange objection was that the drama unfolded like a shocker—as if life in a police-state was not a crime story. Still, the heroism and the villainy are complicated. János Kádár appears on the stage as a single-minded and mediocre personality, well-meaning, hesitant, but not unwilling to commit the vilest crimes. He learned the glossary of a political pamphlet and became convinced of his own historical calling, but he almost seemed to be unaware of what he was doing. Mr. Alan Webb struck me as excellent, catching a bit of the Hamlet, a bit of the Macbeth, in this Bolshevik torn between power and guilt. I particularly liked him at the moment when, asked by a softened version of Mrs. Rajk (Dame Peggy Ashcroft) whether he had known that he was lying to Rajk in his prison cell, Ardrey has him answer desperately, "I don't know whether I knew...." I am sure Kádár didn't.

More questionable is László Rajk's rôle as the martyr and hero of Communist faith. He is here vindicated by both the author and the Hungarian

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people. In the theatre he is held to be "innocent." Innocent of what? Of the crimes ordered by the Party, or the crimes committed against the Party? The playwright is a sophisticated observer, and he must know that a person performing important tasks in the Party could not be innocent of both. He had to betray the top-dogs or the under-dogs. Rajk was a true believer. When he wavered in his fanaticism, or when he became afflicted with doubts and reluctance, or with failing gusto, these apparent vestiges of patriotism and honesty were sufficient to turn the wrath of his comrades against him. They obliged Moscow with the dead body of a "Hungarian Tito." The memory of that curious recalcitrance was also sufficient for the Hungarian people to consider his reburial and rehabilitation as a "victory of truth." What truth? The truth about the absurd show-trial and its tragic, ridiculous confession? Or the truth about the police-state (which Rajk never rejected, unless he did so in his death-cell) and its terror and violence? The hundreds of thousands at his coffin in Budapest never asked. It was not "logical" for them to pay tribute to him as a witness to *their* truth. But people in such circumstances are not logical. It was, I am afraid, not the author of *Shadow of Heroes* who romanticised Rajk. All victims, guilty and innocent alike, suddenly found their solidarity. The ten million Hungarians, referred to by Ardrey's Narrator as the play's real *dramatis personæ*, are faithfully represented by him in their collective mourning which erased, for an historic moment, the dividing line between the honest believers in a wicked creed and the believers in honesty.

Paul Ignotus

Keats or the Upanishads?

Reflections on Lionel Trilling's "Lost Cause"

"CAN we spend our students' time on Keats when all the *Upanishads* wait?" asked Lionel Trilling in his most interesting article, *Reflections on a Lost Cause* (ENCOUNTER, September).

It is a dangerous question, suggesting a whole range of other questions, from "Can we spend our students' time on literature when music and the visual arts wait?" to "Can we spend our students' time on art when science and the H-bomb wait?" If we accept as valid the argument that a subject is not worth a central place in a university curriculum because some other subject is either more important or larger or more urgently necessary for some practical reason, we shall soon find ourselves in a pretty dilemma. There is always another subject more important or larger or more necessary. The study as a "liberal art" of works of literature in any language can be defended not on the grounds of their inclusiveness or the degree to which they illustrate the range and history of human thought, but because a work of literary art represents a special kind of use of the imagination closely bound up with a special kind of medium and the proper study of it illuminates the nature of art *absolutely*. A fully realised work of art is a microcosm of all art, and the claim that other ages or civilisations may have produced bigger and more influential work is relevant only to the student not of art but of civilisation. Now, it is true that the history of any art, and especially of literature, can profitably be taught as the history of civilisation. The "survey course" of which Professor Trilling speaks and which corresponds very closely to the kind of course which I attended throughout my first year at Edinburgh University is generally intended as a mixture of intellectual history, history of taste and *Kulturgeschichte*—though this intention is rarely conscious. Of such a course it would be relevant to enquire how important is the culture which it studies. But even here we must distinguish between different kinds of importance. Do we mean *important* as providing the historical background to the civilisation in which the student lives? Or *important* as having once played an important part in the world, regardless of whether it has had any direct influence on the student's world? Or *important* geographically as having covered or as now covering a large area of the globe? Hundreds of millions of people speak Chinese; is it not more important that we should learn it than that we should learn, say, French, spoken by many fewer people? The religions of the Orient are older than and at least as widespread as the Judaic-Hellenic-Christian tradition; should we not therefore study them? If we take a statistical approach of this kind, the answer can only be "yes."

Literature as cultural history can be studied for patriotic, explanatory, or *welthistorische* reasons; that is, because it is the history of *your* country, because it helps to explain the present state of *your* civilisation, or because it throws light on man's history on this planet. Literature as art is (or should be) studied to increase under-

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standing and appreciation of what literary art and its values are as well as to deepen, by greater discrimination and awareness, one's enjoyment of individual works. The trouble is, of course, that, since literature uses language as its medium (and language is something which manifests itself in history) and requires for its full understanding all those overtones of meaning which literary language employs—since this is so, the study of literature as art also requires some study of literature as history, some investigation of the historical development of language, some knowledge of the ways in which words acquire hinterlands of meaning through their use in earlier literature, and so on. *But* the historical study required of the student of literature as art is not done for what might be called quantitative reasons; the student of literary art turns to history to illuminate the way literary language is used in given cases, not (or at least not directly) in order to acquire more knowledge about what men have been doing on this globe. He will not, or should not, be put off, therefore, by being told that the particular historical study his literary-artistic interests have led him to represents only a tiny part of human history. That for him is a wholly irrelevant consideration. The *Upanishads* may be bigger and better than Keats's odes to the historian of human thought; they may have influenced the mind and imagination of many more people over a longer period of time. But Keats's odes remain Keats's odes, brilliant and unique works of literary art.

This may seem a very roundabout way of approaching Professor Trilling's point about the study of a national literature and the challenge to the study of English literature in America by the study of American and of world literature. But it seems to me important to make up our minds first about the different kinds of things that literary study can do. If its aim is to help the student understand the culture of his own time and place, then obviously the study of American literature is of primary importance for the American student, but the study of English literature is also important, as the English language after all grew up in England and English literature provides the first background of American literature. If its aim is understanding of the growth of a national culture, then too the American student needs both American and English literature. If its aim is knowledge and appreciation of some important works of literary art, then obviously English literature is an obvious choice because it includes many great works of literary art and there is less difficulty with the language (it would be a grave error to assume that there is *no* difficulty) than with other non-American literatures; but, if the language problem can be solved, Greek or Italian or Russian literature, among others, would be equally suitable. But if the aim is to learn about *Man in the World*, then English literature becomes a very insignificant spot indeed. For that matter, if the horizon is extended to India and China or to the whole population of the globe, past and present, the student who is pursuing Man in the World will remain unsatisfied and may well be led to wander for ever among the Gorgons and Hydras and Chimeras dire of anthropologists and archæologists.

It seems to me to be characteristically American to be torn between an ardent nationalism and an equally ardent cosmopolitanism, to want to pursue with equal fervour the Destiny of American Man and the History of Man in the World. That literature courses in American universities are concentrating more and more on these two extremes (and my own eleven-year experience of teaching in American universities bears out Professor Trilling's contention here) seems to me to reflect equally the natural and commendable academic interest in the national literature which has been developing so rapidly in America in recent years and that generous desire to embrace the whole world with sympathetic understanding which is such an engaging feature of the best American students.

I think, however, that it is possible to trace more precisely than Professor Trilling has done how this situation has come about. The attack on the survey course by the so-called New Criticism was just beginning to gather momentum when I first went to America, to teach at the University of Chicago, at the end of 1937. The New Critics argued that literature was literature and not history; that every work of literary art was unique and timeless and self-existing; and that the *mélange* of history and potted criticism which made up the average survey course was a horrid confusion of kinds and completely obscured the real nature of a literary work. They could not have chosen a more vulnerable target. The survey course in English literature, at that time a staple commodity in American as in British universities, had for the most part (there were always noble exceptions) become a dreary conflation of facts and opinions, of potted biographies and critical generalisations, droned out by bored lecturers to bored students. The better American universities acknowledged with surprising rapidity that the careful critical study of individual works was more desirable than the memorising of potted surveys, and the "author course" soon ousted, or at least grew to rival, the survey course. Ideally, the New Critics' position was that every work of literary art should be studied as though it were contemporary and anonymous; in fact, they recognised the historical nature of language and allowed for history

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as part of the preliminary "recovery of the text." But the history allowed into an author course was inevitably meagre. The student gained in freshness, vigour and detail from his study of individual works; he lost that generalised knowledge of historical periods that even the worst of survey courses was generally able to communicate. At first this seemed nothing but gain. As the techniques of new critical analysis became more standardised, and as the second and then the third generation of those trained in the method grew to be teachers themselves, author courses often came to consist of fantastically ingenious analyses and *explications* of individual texts and the danger of a barren scholasticism replaced the danger of a string of dead generalisations.

Now, it must be remembered that when the new critical attack on the survey course developed, the standard survey course was in English, not American, literature, so that the study of English literature was, if obliquely, involved in the attack. At this very time the academic prestige of American literature was steadily rising. So that if a general course in the whole of English literature was replaced by individual (optional) courses in Donne, Pope, and Hopkins, it was replaced also by author courses in Hawthorne and Whitman and Melville and James. American literature came in, for the most part, as author courses, though of course there are also surveys of American literature given at many American universities. This is because the rise of the New Criticism and the rise of academic enthusiasm for American literature roughly coincided.

All this happened in the early years of the war. The war, and the uneasy peace that followed, encouraged interest in international problems. It was what might be called the United Nations phase of the American imagination that seized on World Literature as a suitable subject of study for the American student. Of course there were other factors, some of them emerging much earlier, and Professor Trilling reminds us that Columbia College instituted its "Humanities A" in 1937. The argument about the nature of a liberal education precipitated by Robert M. Hutchins when he was President of the University of Chicago and carried on throughout the war and later by earnest academics (the Harvard report on *General Education in a Free Society*, in 1944, was an admirable example of this sort of thing), the uneasiness about American "materialism," the counter-attack by the Humanities in the face of the increasing importance of the sciences—all this helped to turn the thoughts of American university teachers to world literature. There emerged many ways of handling this large subject, from Mortimer Adler's mystical view of the Great Books of the World (which has had an enormous influence) to the new critical study of selected texts (*e.g.*, by Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe) for their artistic form rather than for their historical importance in influencing men's minds. History has crept in more and more to world literature courses, and this not only because history is needed for background and explanation. Montaigne, for example, figured in the Cornell literature course when I was Chairman of the Division of Literature there, and the unspoken reason for this was clearly that his way of thinking represented a significant development in European thought. But the scope and variety of such courses prevent any attempt to string them on to a single historical *continuum* in the way of the old survey course in English literature.

So I don't think that the decline of England as a world power has anything to do, as Professor Trilling suggests it has, with the decline of the English survey course or of the study of English literature in general at American universities. After all, Roman schoolboys studied Greek literature and English schoolboys studied Latin literature for centuries—and only after the respective civilisations had declined. English literature for a time took the place for the Americans that Greek had for the Romans and Latin for the English; the fact that it has been in large measure replaced so quickly by American literature is the result partly of the speeding up of all such processes in our time and partly of the factors I have been discussing. It should be realised that the study of English literature as a university subject in England dates (with a few exceptions) from early in the present century; the Americans, like the Scots, started much earlier, and when they moved away to concentrate on their own literature they had already done their stint at studying a "background" literature as the English had for so long studied Latin. I used to remind Americans who complained at the slow recognition of American literature as an important subject in their own universities that America began the academic study of its own literature at a much earlier period in its history than any European country has done.

What I have written represents inevitably an over-simplification. For example, the development of the "area study" idea, so encouraged by some of the big grant-giving foundations, has fostered a certain kind of literary study—the study of the literature of a foreign country in connection with its history, politics, sociology, and so on. This is what might be called the State Department approach to literary study. This is valuable if only because it does emphasise the *otherness* of other times and places which,

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as Professor Trilling remarks, is what the average American student is so insensitive to. Indeed, I would say that the tendency to live in the present, the absence of the historical imagination, the lack of comprehension of other ways of living and behaving, is a radical feature of the American mind, related to the circumstances in which America as an independent country was born.

Can we conclude from this that Americans need to study literature as history more than most people? And, further, that because of the language barrier (few American students can really study Greek tragedy because of their ignorance of the language and the whole "feel" of Greek civilisation) English literature is their most suitable foreign literature, to be studied as a foreign literature as a means of learning something of the otherness of other people and places? And that by spreading world literature courses too thin over the whole of the globe they risk perpetuating that superficiality in their knowledge of foreign countries, that generous but dangerous misinterpretation of their life and work and art in the light of their own time and place, which is such a prime American weakness?

I am not sure, but I cannot help feeling that the ordinary American student has a far better chance of *knowing* Keats than of knowing the *Upanishads*.

Over a hundred years ago a professor of philosophy at St. Andrew's University invented the term "epistemology," meaning "theory of knowledge." That term was taken up by later philosophers, who have ignored the other term which Professor Ferrier invented at the same time—"agnoiology," meaning "theory of ignorance." He argued, in discussing his theory of ignorance, that as human knowledge expands and the area of human interest grows, every individual has an increasingly less chance to know all that there is to be known. Every increase of astrophysical knowledge makes every non-astrophysicist more ignorant. Increase of potential knowledge means increase of actual ignorance: relative to the amount of knowledge in the world, we all grow more ignorant daily.

The solution is not to pursue the will-of-the-wisp of world knowledge, whether through world literature or anything else. It is, I should think, (1) to *know* what we know, (2) to have some careful and real knowledge of something quite outside our own experience, and (3) to understand and appreciate through long but joyful study the nature and formal qualities of art. Art is microcosmic and thus leaps at one bound out of Professor Ferrier's dilemma. I conclude that literary courses in America as elsewhere can serve two main purposes, which I can call symbolically Art and Otherness. History is involved directly in the latter, and incidentally in the former.

There are no nightingales in America: the study of Keats's ode to that bird will take most American students of literature as far as they can go in the full awareness of an alien experience. For most of them, as for most of us, the *Upanishads*, however significant in world history, are a snare and a delusion.

David Daiches

Bert Brecht's Difficulties

THE report (in *From the Other Shore*, ENCOUNTER, September) that shortly before his death Bertolt Brecht had been engaged on a translation of Adam Wazyk's highly unorthodox *Poem for Adults* has once more drawn attention to Brecht's complex and ambiguous attitude to the East German Communist régime (and present-day Communist orthodoxy in general). Nor is the attitude of the German Communists to him without its ambiguities. As a writer in the East Berlin periodical *Theater der Zeit* put it recently:

> Bertolt Brecht used to be abused as a formalist, as an anti-realist. After his death two years ago official obituaries described him as "the greatest German . . . the most significant contemporary dramatist." Since then no one abuses Brecht in public. Since then one only abuses the Brechtians or those who are taken for Brechtians. . . .

As Brecht is the only really great contemporary literary figure to have become identified with Stalinist (and post-Stalinist) Communism, his real attitude towards it is of considerable interest.

Since about 1930 Brecht was a convinced Marxist. Marxism to him was above all an eminently "theatrical philosophy." The doctrine of the class-struggle was a grand dramatic concept and so, to Brecht, was the Hegelian dialectic, for it could, after all, make the same action or character assume a different valuation and significance according to different circumstances. In the early 'thirties, moreover, the Communist party seemed to many German intellectuals, who were impatient with the petty bureaucracy of the Social Democrats, the only really effective force in the fight against the menace of Hitler.

Yet when he went into exile after the *Reichstag* fire, Brecht did not go to Soviet Russia although he had been invited to make his home there. For a time he was co-editor of a German-language literary review, *Das Wort*, published in Moscow, but he performed his editorial duties from the curious distance of a home in Denmark. And when he decided to leave Europe in 1941 he crossed the entire Soviet Union from Helsinki

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to Vladivostok—in order to embark for California.

Nevertheless, in 1948, he did return to East Berlin. Even then he took elaborate precautions. He deposited money in Switzerland, granted the copyright of his works to a West German publisher, and took the trouble to acquire Austrian nationality. No doubt Brecht had high hopes for the Communist régime in Germany. The lavish means put at his disposal by the East German authorities, and the presence of many of the best friends of his youth, must have made his decision much easier.

Having once done so, however, he soon ran into a series of difficulties. These led to a gradual process of disillusionment. His production of *Mother Courage* was criticised as lacking in "positive propaganda content." When he produced his most positively Communist play, the adaptation of Gorky's *Mother*, the SED's Central Committee criticised it as "formalist." His opera, *The Trial of Lucullus*, had to be withdrawn after a single performance in March 1951, because it had condemned war without making a distinction between "aggressive" and "defensive" wars. His debunking productions of the German classics, notably Goethe's *Urfaust*, were violently attacked as being "insults to the most precious jewels of Germany's national heritage." He was publicly admonished to adopt the Russian methods of Stanislavsky, the very style he had laboured all his life to supersede with his own "epic theatre." Nevertheless, after the Berlin rising of June 17th, 1953, a message of loyalty from Brecht addressed to Ulbricht appeared in the official organ of the SED, *Neues Deutschland*. This led to violent attacks on Brecht in Western Germany and to the withdrawal of some productions of his plays that had been planned there. But it is now possible to state with absolute certainty that this "message of loyalty"—which consisted of a single sentence—was in fact merely the *last sentence of a long and critical letter* to Ulbricht, which the latter had suppressed. Strangely enough, confirmation of this startling fact comes from East Germany itself. It is tucked away in the bibliographical section of the commemorative issue of the periodical *Sinn und Form* which lists contributions by Brecht to newspapers and periodicals. Brecht's message to Ulbricht (published in *Neues Deutschland* of June 21st, 1953) is listed there as *"Final sentence of a letter."*

The same commemorative issue of *Sinn und Form* also contains a number of posthumous poems by Brecht (dated 1953) which show not only a considerable uneasiness but a distinct sense of guilt about the events of the 17th of June.

In the period of readjustment after the abortive East German rebellion, when the régime was evidently more ready than ever before (or after) to search its own conscience, Brecht was in the forefront of the critics of the heavy-handed system of bureaucratic cultural control. The reforms he advocated were, in fact, carried out; the so-called "Office for Literature" was abolished. But it was only replaced by other, equally bureaucratic bodies. While Brecht repeatedly, and no doubt sincerely, supported the "Peace Campaign" with vigorous letters to West German intellectuals and speeches at Peace Congresses, his disillusionment with the Ulbricht-Grotewohl régime grew. Shortly before his death, at the Fourth German Writers' Congress in January 1956, he said: "The theatres of the German Democratic Republic are—regrettably from my point of view—among the few theatres in Europe that do not perform my plays...." And Wolfgang Harich, the brilliant young Marxist philosopher who was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude for having called for a reform of the East German system, categorically stated in the manifesto he wrote for his group of dissident young SED-members: "Bertolt Brecht sympathised with our group up to the time of his death and saw in it the healthy forces of our party. In our frequent discussions with Bertolt Brecht we could see how bitterly he felt about the conditions around us...."

Harich's group was the German equivalent of the Petoefi Circle in Hungary and of the *Po Prostu* group in Poland. There can be little doubt that this was in fact the position Brecht had reached before he died in August 1956. This was, perhaps, the height of "the thaw" after Khrushchev's anti-Stalin speech of the preceding February. Some months after Brecht's death, this trend culminated in the Hungarian revolution. It would have presented Brecht with the most crucial choice of his life. Brecht was no "hero" and he did not believe in heroism. He might, conceivably, have accepted even the suppression of the Hungarian revolution. But it would have been a painful burden on his political conscience. Luckily for him, he was spared this decision. Brecht was famous for his uncanny sense of timing: in the theatre, in his life—and also, as it turned out, in the timing of his death. But as he himself said in one of his last recorded interviews, published in an East Berlin Communist newspaper, "Tell them I was always difficult and will remain difficult, and even after my death there are still ways of creating difficulties...."

Martin Esslin

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FROM A DIARY

IN Warsaw recently I saw a movie called *Ashes and Diamond*, after the novel of that name by Jerzy Andrzejewski, which demonstrates the ambiguousness of ideological themes in present-day Poland.

A young man of the Polish underground shoots the secretary of a political party which appears to be Communist. During an interval between assassinations (the film opens with him shooting the occupants of a jeep which he takes to be that of the secretary), the young man falls in love with a barmaid. Against the background of a burned-out church, he asks the girl whether it would be possible for him to go to Warsaw University and live a more normal life than this one of killings. But his party boss will not excuse him one more murder. After he has shot the party secretary dead in an empty street, the sight of three soldiers who are in no way suspicious of him makes him lose his head. They raise their rifles and shoot a boy running away across fields of rubbish, as nonchalantly as might a farmer a startled rabbit.

The action of *Ashes and Diamond* takes place during the period of confusion in Poland immediately after the war, when the patriotic partisan fighters of the underground were being cleaned up by the Communists. The question of what side the spectator should take in a film about a struggle of ideologies, is complicated by the fact that although the party secretary plays a sympathetic rôle, uniformed Russian officers attending a mayoral banquet are treated satirically. The patriots of the Polish army are heroic, and yet there is a scene in which an old-style chic reactionary, plotting in a smart restaurant, presumably evokes no one's sympathy.

The censor, and the producer's attempts to anticipate his objections, introduce new ambiguities. Apparently part of the banquet scene has been cut, where the satire seemed too pointedly anti-Russian; and at the last moment a scene has been inserted into the beginning of the film in which the party secretary, looking sepulchrally benevolent, attired in a mackintosh, and photographed from below—in the manner of the Ascension-like appearances of political commissars in Russian films of the 'twenties—delivers a homily whose emphatic humanity and constructiveness are apparent without one having to know Polish.

The direction of *Ashes and Diamond* is as much a patchwork as its messages are at cross purposes. It opens in the early Russian style of lyrical ideological realism. The banquet scene, ending with a drunkard grotesquely dancing along the table and upsetting the guests, is pure René Clair. The love sequences and the barmaid recall glimmering shadowy whispered close-ups of *Sous les toits de Paris*. There is a good deal of documentary, and the scene in the ruined church, with a charred crucifix hanging upside down and swaying to and fro in the foreground, is Scandinavian symbolic.

Yet in Warsaw this collage of ideologies and styles seems to reflect exactly the shape of life going on in Poland outside the cinema. Warsaw itself, old yet entirely rebuilt, is a contemporary architectural hotch-potch reflecting Stalinism, modernist nationalist Polish architecture, and a perfect replica of the old city—the whole surmounted by the cloud-piercing tower of Russia's gift to Warsaw, the Palace of Culture (a building of an ugliness to remind one that, of all the arts, architecture is the best at constructing nightmares).

In life itself there is an amazing consistency about the inconsistencies of Poland; complete freedom of speech combined with heavy censorship, patriotism and impassioned Catholicism with support of the Communist Gomulka. The effect of Gomulka's policy—itself perhaps a sustained exercise in ambiguity—is that opposing ideas which ought to be in conflict are superimposed, stuck on top of one another. Collage can almost be a physical experience in Poland. At first I was struck by the extraordinary greyness of the people. I went away feeling that under the drab clothing there are feelings as passionate, devout and vivid as the stained glass in the Church of Maryacki at Cracow.

IN Warsaw at the same time as *Ashes and Diamond* there was playing John Osborne's *The Entertainer*, following on *Look Back in Anger*, which had been performed some months earlier. Obviously Osborne's angry impoverished young and old characters have something in common with the young hero of *Ashes and Diamond*—except that they shoot off nothing but words. In both, the anger comes out of the ashes which are society, and in both the diamond that is discovered by the hero is the truth of a personal relationship. In both, too, so much hatred, corruption, and violence has been asked to be redeemed by a love affair, that one doubts whether any relationship could stand the strain. The diamond looks a bit like paste.

So what one is left with in both Jerzy Andrzejewski and John Osborne is more ashes than diamond. One might almost say the young English writers went in search of ashes almost

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as difficult to find as diamonds: gathering together a precious few out of the clean dustbins of the Welfare State. John Osborne certainly has social passion, and yet, when one is in Warsaw, one feels that he over-exploits the evils he attacks. So much is made of one Trafalgar Square meeting about Suez, of the feelings of a family over the death of a British officer in the fighting! A young Polish critic, Leszek Elektorowicz, discussing *Look Back in Anger* in a Warsaw journal, feels that Mr. Osborne is angry about a social truth which the English seek to cover over and deny:

> The Crown unites this fragmentary, socially divided society. This is paradoxical, anachronistic! All around there is the hydrogen bomb, planning, intercontinental missiles, Sputniks. But there is nothing an Englishman admires more than the splendour of the royal masquerade. The ceremonial which accompanies a nice, pleasant young lady wearing a rather unfashionable headgear, unites the nation in sheepish contemplation. Can one wonder that the "angry young men" are irritated by this comedy? If only there were the prospect of a happy ending. . . . But the Empire is falling to pieces from old age and its old-type politicians are jostled around and commit follies.

What makes this worth quoting is the point it makes (perhaps inadvertently) that the English are living within a catastrophe which—if one compares it with the situation in Eastern Europe—has not happened. Yet Poles, Hungarians, and Czechs are living within an all-too-palpable disaster. Probably most of the English authors of *Declaration* do have very much the feelings Mr. Elektorowicz describes. If so, they stumble when they try to realise what they think to be the underlying real situation. *Ashes and Diamond* is convincing because it deals with things that have really happened, which are indeed still happening, in Eastern Europe. But a meeting in Trafalgar Square, the death of a soldier in Suez, the inability of Mr. Osborne's characters to fit happily into the Welfare State, however pathetic, fail to symbolise a reality which in a large part of the world is already palpable. Seeing *The Entertainer* in Warsaw is like seeing a play about characters who complain of headaches, performed in a hospital before an audience of inmates who have cancer. Mr. Elektorowicz—a patient—assumes that the headache is an early symptom of the same disease. Mr. Osborne thinks it is the disease.

DURING my days in Poland, I felt that I was beginning to understand why so much Western literature, when it deals with social themes, seems like a kind of frantic shadow boxing: why, just when Mr. Osborne speaks out most, one finds oneself asking what his play is about, why writing like that of Mr. Tennessee Williams when it expresses suffering, seems to measure itself against some other suffering which goes on invisibly beyond a wall, why the Beat Generation, meaning to identify their howls with the despairing situation of a world, seems merely to express a personal disgust or nostalgia.

The reason is that in the West we live on two planes of reality. One plane is what-is-happening-over-here (which includes the "royal masquerade," increasing prosperity, social security), the other is what-is-happening-over-there, which includes the poverty of three-quarters of the populations of the world, the suppression of freedom, the shadow of recently-closed concentration camps, and—perhaps—our own future submitted to these conditions. The plane of the reality that is terrible lies beneath the plane of the civilisation that is (comparatively) free. All this has the effect of making the most strenuous efforts of writers in the West (and here I am not thinking just of the "Angries" but of Orwell's *1984* or Camus's *La Peste*) seem enormous constructions to elaborate as fantasy in the West that which is the concrete inescapable circumstances of Eastern Europe.

AT THE beginning of the first World War, Rilke wrote a letter to a friend explaining that since suffering is measured by the capacity of each individual to feel, then the suffering of thousands is no worse than that of the single individual. This is a point of view which some writers in the West have endeavoured to maintain. It seems consistent with a passionate individualism to regard suffering as qualitative, not quantitative. In this way our Rilkes do not have to be over-impressed by the agonies of whole communities.

Partly with the idea of settling in my own mind the question whether Rilke was right, when I was at Cracow I visited Auschwitz. I went away convinced that a factory for killing four million people is after all more terrible than the most sensitive single death-bed, and that the underlying social realities of our time are concentration camps, in all their varieties and degrees, and the police state. Yet to the young writers of the 1950's, Auschwitz probably means little more than something which was reflected in the poems of a literary movement of the 1930's, a movement which is dismissed to-day, no doubt, partly because of the failure of the poets of that decade to imagine the horror which they intellectually knew.

Yet to many writers in that part of the world where there is political censorship it appears that without our Western freedom—which is not just freedom of expression but also freedom

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of every personal solution of problems—writing is impossible. When I was in Poland the flight of the young writer Hlasko to the West was a terrible symbol of the dilemma of the Polish writer. Hlasko chooses to live in the West where he is free to write and to publish as he wills; but, in doing so, he abandons the material (the low life of the streets of Warsaw) he can write about, the area of the language in which he can write.

THERE are signs perhaps that we are living in a period in which there could be a literature expressing, within the context of a particular place, a world situation. Political barriers have frustrated that development of the consciousness of all humanity which Goethe envisaged as the world literature of a future that lay just beyond his time.

The division of the world into political camps, more or less completely shut off from each other, frustrates our consciousness that in the modern world people are involved in one another's civilisation and values as never before in history, and because of the frustration leads to a peculiar kind of contemporary uneasiness and sense of inadequacy. Different values, different experiences, different standards of living *over there*, undermine the realities and values *over here*. Thus from one point of view the immense proliferation of American literature in this century is a triumph of the values of individualist freedom: but, from another, judged by the experiences, the standards of living, the involvement in social environment of nine-tenths of the world, the epics of American neuroses are an immense fuss about nothing.

Yet when Western writers try to emphasise their social awareness by drawing attention to their own victims—John Osborne's soldier killed at Suez, John Berger (in *A Painter of Our Time*) describing a meeting with a Cypriot woman in Soho—behind these isolated examples there lie the victims of Hungary, and (a little further back in time) those of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, the forced labour camps of Siberia and the Arctic circle. Hence, then, those frantic efforts to grip at the larger realities by equating them with the smaller ones, "Cyprus is just as bad as Hungary", "We have our economic slavery", "What we do is exactly as bad in its way as what they have done". Hence even the feeling that our freedom is a delusion since, in enabling us to express ourselves freely, it imprisons us in our individuality, and cuts us off from the social context which provides the basis of contemporary reality.

Yet *over there* surely the converse of all this is felt. There Western freedom is apprehended as forbidden fruit leading to terrible truth and knowledge. Its very existence in the world undermines and falsifies the values of the conformist society run by and for man, the social unit. There, without Western freedom, the most "progressive" societies are accompanied by the strange contradiction of the most reactionary arts. Hence behind the shrieks and lamentations *over there* about *Dr Zhivago*, walk surely ghosts of unwritten masterpieces (masterpieces by Western standards)—books which the other Soviet writers resisted the temptation of writing, because the values of independent witness would have undermined the Soviet view of reality. Pasternak has surely excited *over there* feelings not just of hostility, but of anguish.

Poland left me feeling that for the Polish intellectuals, at any rate, consciousness is all they can cling to in a situation where they are free to speak freely, but to write much less freely. And the consciousness they need is not only their own self-consciousness in a political vacuum. They need us to have a consciousness which includes awareness of them as they are, in their situation, and which is not just the parlour game of identifying what happens here with what happens there. One writer quoted to me the lines of a Polish poem, which he freely rendered—"If we have to die, O God, let the people be aware of how we die."

Stephen Spender

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Autumn Book List

Conviction
Edited by Norman MacKenzie **18s**

'The most stimulating, heartening and intelligent manifesto to come from the Left for a very long time indeed.' *Economist* 'I cannot imagine that anybody, whatever his political views, will read it without profit.' *Sunday Times* 'Lively and stimulating – here is the material for a stirring campaign.' *Manchester Guardian*

The Good Lion
Len Doherty **18s**

'Very good indeed . . . excellent descriptions of action, boxing matches, dance-hall rough-houses and a pit accident. Mr. Doherty is a born writer and plainly a man of great intelligence.' *New Statesman* 'Gets to grips with the sort of life that people really live.' *Manchester Guardian*

River Giant
Roger Curel **15s**

'Much of the savage charm of Africa is captured in this story of two Frenchmen and an African who unite to destroy a huge, almost mythical, hippopotamus. The pursuit of the animal is incidental to a powerful description of the life and customs of the people of Central Africa.' *Times Weekly Review*

The Gravy Train
Edmund Ward **15s**

'This talented novel is strongly recommended, particularly for its caustic dialogue and wit.' *Times Literary Supplement* 'The extraordinary technical efficiency, pomposity, hospitality and friendliness of Joe's American friends are most happily observed. Mr. Ward excels at this kind of quietly sardonic portraiture.' *The Times*

Idle on Parade
William Camp **15s**

'Extremely funny.' JOHN BETJEMAN, *Daily Telegraph*. 'Very funny – life in a Guards regiment as seen by a quietly unmilitary man who prefers girls to arms drill.' *Observer* 'Wodehouse on the drill square.' *Daily Mail* 'A genuinely funny book that reads itself.' *New Statesman*

Second Chorus
Humphrey Lyttelton **15s**

'Takes jazz seriously but never runs into absurdity. Packed with perception and sound sense.' *Sunday Times* 'In literature, as in music, Humph has style, intelligence, and considerable personality. He is, in fact, a natural writer and raconteur.' *New Statesman*

Crossing the Line
Claud Cockburn **18s**

'The most engaging of historians, the most persuasive of story-tellers, the liveliest political gadfly of an age.' *Times Literary Supplement* 'Vintage Cockburn; astringently witty, sardonically perceptive, the prose a delight to read.' *Sunday Times* 'Outstandingly well written and packed with splendid anecdotes.' *Spectator*

A Wreath for the Innocents
Francis Ebejer **15s**

Lt. John Xiberras de Balyard was a scion of one of Malta's noblest families, Lucia the daughter of a wine shop owner – but they fell in love. The odds were all against them; only Lucia's confessor realised that here was a God-sent opportunity to unite the classes on the island.

Olaf
Godfrey Lias **18s**

The true life adventure story of a modern Viking who has knocked around the world from one adventure to another. He fought for France in World War I, in Spain for the Republicans, and was a spy for the British in Germany in World War II.

Honey and Gall
Emmanuel d'Astier **15s**

This novel traces the lives of Antoine and Nadiejda against the historical background of the last forty years. We meet them first as children, Antoine in France at war, Nadiejda in the Russian Revolution; in Paris between the wars; and finally, married with the coming of peace.

MACGIBBON & KEE

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BOOKS

The Idea of Colonialism

INTELLECTUALS really are the limit, especially those on the other side of the Atlantic. Having spent decades preaching the iniquities of colonialism, they suddenly wake up to its virtues just at the moment when the colonial administrators are beginning to lose heart. After rendering the whole concept arid with the salt of their scepticism, they start throwing off supposedly fruitful ideas about how it can be recultivated to the advantage of world peace and security. Recently published, for example, is a massive volume, *The Idea of Colonialism*,* written by a posse of distinguished American scholars, which solemnly puts into multi-syllable words what every colonial administrator has known in his bones all along: (1) that the withdrawal of the Western colonial Powers from presently dependent areas would enhance the power of the Soviet bloc; (2) that there are many cases of peoples who are now incapable of self-government and who could not maintain their independence; and (3) that the inter-relationship between dependent and developed peoples cannot be wholly severed in fact. Or, to put it more succinctly: if the anti-colonialists had their way the world would be plunged into economic and political chaos, the dependent peoples would exchange one relatively light yoke for another far more onerous, and the Soviet Union would inherit the earth.

What none of these distinguished contributors realise, however, is that the will to resist these developments, having been corroded ceaselessly for a quarter of a century, cannot be restored by this kind of posthumous injection of realism. Doubt and defeatism have spread too far in the Western body politic to be cured by a few pats on the back from a score of Harvard and Columbia Doctors in political science. Their belated recognition that British and French colonialism has many virtues reads like a centenary reappraisal of an unjustly denigrated figure of the past. Indeed, one is painfully reminded of those scholarly treatises which seek to show that the divine right of kings was not such a bad doctrine after all, better at any rate than the devilish right of dictators. Interesting, even stimulating—but no amount of posthumous justification will put King Charles' head back on his shoulders.

The truth is, of course, that the "idea" of colonialism is no longer a worthwhile subject for discussion. Nobody any longer believes in the white man's missionary burden. Where it is at all possible to withdraw without running excessive dangers, the colonial Powers do so with relief. In the awkward areas, like Algeria, the argument is not about colonialism at all. It is a battle between two armies for the control of a particular piece of territory to which both lay claim—a classical struggle for power. Neither the French settler in Algeria, nor, for example, the British in Kenya, base their case on any colonial ideology, any more than in the 16th century England based her claim to Calais on a colonial ideology or the Spanish their claim to the Low Countries. They do not say: "We *ought* to rule these backward countries." They say: "What we have we hold, because our right is as good, if not better, than yours, and in any case we have more guns." And although their coloured opponents still pretend to believe in anti-colonial ideology, and exploit its emotive potentialities wherever possible, in practice they have long since shown their contempt for it. In Algeria the FLN does not for a moment think of allowing self-determination for rival rebel groups; they quite simply cut their throats. Mr. Nehru has no intention of allowing the Kashmiris to choose their own future; nor does Dr. Nkrumah hesitate to lock up his Ashanti dissidents.

The simple truth is that both sides of the colonial debate were intellectually untenable—an attempt by the colonising Powers to disguise their superior strength as superior virtue, and by the colonised to cover up their weakness by a show of moral strength. Now that the former are no longer so strong and the latter no longer

* *The Idea of Colonialism*. Edited by ROBERT STRAUSZ-HUPÉ and HARRY W. HAZARD. Atlantic Books, Stevens, 42s.

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so weak, neither finds it so necessary to go on with the make-believe. Unfortunately, although both colonised and colonisers have lost faith in their ideological fictions, neither have yet taken the next step, which is frankly to recognise the facts of power. The colonising States, reluctantly made aware of the hypocrisy of their pretended motives, find it difficult to recognise that their actual motives—maintenance of economic and strategic advantage—are in no way invalidated just because their disguise has been seen through. Equally, the colonised peoples, whose pretence it has been to be struggling for abstract Freedom, for Humanity, cannot get themselves to realise that in the modern world anti-Western crusades are not only irrelevant but actually dangerous—to themselves, above all. The momentum of ideology continues to drag both parties down the road to ruin, long after each side has ceased to believe in it. As a result, the colonisers continue to hang on, but without heart in the battle, and the colonised, although winning the anti-Western battle, leave themselves defenceless in the face of Russian and Chinese expansion.

The difficulty, of course, is that both sides have a certain short-term interest in continuing the ideological debate. Nobody would deny that it helps the dependent areas in their struggle to wrest power from the West to pretend at the United Nations that their aim is individual freedom, democracy, self-determination, etc., just as it helped the West in the heyday of its colonial expansion to boast of a civilising mission. So long, therefore, as the colonised peoples continue to talk nonsense about "Liberty" the West will continue to talk nonsense about "Civilisation." Neither side can afford to shoulder the onus of realism unilaterally—at least not in public.

What is needed is a generation of coloured intellectuals able to debunk anti-colonial hypocrisy from within as effectively as during the last few decades white intellectuals have debunked colonial hypocrisy from within. Unfortunately, there is no Asian Mr. Gollancz to tell some of the new Asian statesmen that they are something of a humbug; nor is it reasonable to expect Dr. Nkrumah to set up an Accra School of Economics under some black Harold Laski to urge the British to stand up for their rights. It is, I suggest, up to a new generation of Western intellectuals to set about the massive process of re-education. They must not only restore realism to their own peoples but also to Africa and Asia. Having in the past wonderfully fogged the issue, they must set about clarifying it.

I am sure this cannot be done by the method adopted by the writers in *The Idea of Colonialism*. Judicious analysis of the benefits dependent peoples receive from the colonial status, mild contradictions of the wilder charges against imperialism, balanced suggestions for a combined N.A.T.O. approach to the development of backward countries, do not begin to measure up to the problem. Merely to defend colonialism, or to attempt its reform, or to point out the dangers of too precipitate a change, allows the debate to remain in its present intellectually stultifying groove. The only way to inculcate realism is to re-phrase, so to speak, the motion under debate. It is, I think, valueless to-day to argue about how best to lead the dependent peoples towards self-government, or how best to discourage newly-independent peoples from abusing their new freedom, or how to deal with areas which for one reason or another can never hope to be independent. Defined in these ways the argument at once reverts to ideological slogan-thinking which goes round and round in circles. The rewarding question is surely: "How can the emerging continents of Asia and Africa be fitted into a world balance-of-power which does not leave the West hopelessly at a disadvantage?" Until this root question is answered it is impossible to think realistically about the branch problems, such as which country should enjoy independence and when.

It seems to me that what is called the evolving Commonwealth, or the supposedly imaginative Gaullist concept of a French Federation, only postpone any realistic grappling with this root question. To suppose that Britain, India, Ceylon, Ghana, Nigeria, and Australia, can form a viable political community, is manifestly absurd—a hangover, on all sides, of colonial habits of thought. In the long run, the relationship between Africa and Asia and Europe and America will be determined, as are all international relationships, on calculations of national interest which by definition cannot be fixed on a permanent basis. India's links with Britain, for example, will depend more on what China does in the future than on what Britain did in the past.

Just as in the 19th century the relationship between individual European Powers was constantly shifting, in accordance with changes in the balance of power, so to-day relations between Afro-Asia and Europe and America will also be subject to diplomatic revolutions. Nothing has happened to make the brute facts of power less decisive. The only difference is that the West has become so accustomed to regarding the new continents, as, somehow, "moral problems," requiring a wholly different approach from that normally governing international relations, that it cannot adapt itself to current reality. It persists, therefore, in searching for a new, enlightened colonial policy whereas what is actually required is a new, realistic foreign policy.

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If imperialism means an attempt by one State to increase its power beyond its present borders, then the essence of imperialism is expansion. Are Britain and France to-day expansionist Powers? They are, in fact, the very opposite, concerned only with preserving the status quo. It is precisely the so-called anti-imperialist States, like India and Egypt and Morocco, who wish to expand. It is, for example, India which wishes to expand her power into Goa against the will of the local inhabitants, rather than Portugal which wishes to expand into India; it is Ghana which boasts of her intention to extend her influence throughout all West Africa; and it is Morocco that claims "sovereignty" over the Sahara, where no Moroccans live.

The difficulty is, of course, that imperialist Powers usually only earn that title after they have ceased to deserve it. While they are in the process of expansion, they can usually concentrate attention not so much on what they are gaining as on what other ex-imperialist Powers are losing. After World War I, for example, Britain and France vastly increased their power in Europe and the Levant by undermining the Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires. What was, in fact, Anglo-French imperialism looked to much of the world as Anglo-French anti-imperialism and support for "self-determination." To-day, the tables are being turned. Egypt is hailed as a great exponent of anti-imperialism because she is successfully erecting her own empire under the guise of breaking up Britain's. The same thing happened in India. As Britain withdrew, the new State of India extended its power into Kashmir and Hyderabad. There is nothing necessarily wrong in this. Nor is there necessarily anything right. It is not anti-imperialism triumphing over imperialism, not liberty replacing subjection. It is one Power replacing another.

Imperialist Powers on the make have always used the principle of self-determination to help disrupt empires on the wane. Nineteenth-century British penetration into Africa was enormously facilitated by championing one tribe's right to independence from some other tribe; or one pretender chief's claim to overthrow the current legitimate ruler. To many groups, therefore, Britain arrived as the great liberator. Their right to self-determination was augmented rather than diminished.

Take another example. In Eastern and Central Europe after the first World War, the principle of national self-determination was also used by new imperialism against old. The destruction of the Austro-Hungarian empire—the old imperial order—at once called forth new imperialisms. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia rushed into the power vacuum and struggled among each other to carve out the maximum sphere of influence possible. Germany put an end to this struggle by exploiting the same self-determination principle against these very countries. The German minorities in Czechoslovakia and Poland became the excuse for a new German imperialism, an excuse which, in the notorious *Times* leader at the time of Munich, was accepted by the West: "Self-determination, the professed principle of the Versailles Treaty, has been invoked by Hitler against its written text, and his appeal has been allowed."

It seems to me that writers and thinkers on international affairs to-day are falling into a similar trap. We must, they say, "come to terms" with Arab and Asian nationalism, which in effect means allowing them to determine their own future as they see fit. This, however, is a novel doctrine which does not stand up to a moment's analysis. There is no possible moral obligation for one State voluntarily to allow another to take actions which are gravely contrary to its own interests. If Britain refuses to withdraw a base, this has nothing to do with colonialism or any other "ism"—except perhaps realism. It is because Britain believes that withdrawal would endanger the balance of power. Exactly the same considerations should govern Britain's attitude to Ceylon or Egypt, for example, as would govern America's attitude to Italy. If Italy went Communist and threatened to vote itself behind the Iron Curtain, the United States would probably intervene with force. If Jordan threatened to merge with Israel, Egypt would also hold itself free to prevent this by force. And India has already moved to prevent Kashmir from merging with Pakistan. This would not be colonialism, any more than Britain's decision in 1939 to fight for the independence of Poland was colonialism.

It is absurd to suppose that just because the newly independent countries were once colonies, and the West was once their colonisers, they should be regarded as outside the normal patterns of international behaviour. We are, in short, no more obliged to accept "Afro-Asian terms" than any other country's terms. Nor is the West likely to gain the long-term friendship of Africa and Asia by acceding to their demands for precipitate withdrawal. The idea that if the West gets out fast enough a grateful coloured world will rally to its side is naïve. Far from it being the *realpolitik* school who still think in colonialist terms it is, in fact, the liberals who still persist in expecting former colonial areas, who are now independent, to behave quite differently from any other States in history. They refuse to believe that these areas will ever graduate into the world of power-politics—an attitude which, to my mind, smacks of intolerable patronage. Those who recognise that Asia and

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Africa could prove formidable rivals seem to me far less colonial-minded than those who continue to treat them like children who can be bribed by sweets.

Advocates of "hanging on" as long as physically possible are hardly more sensible. Clearly there comes a moment when imperial possessions prove more a source of weakness than strength. The Afro-Asian independence movement constitutes a major diplomatic and political revolution. Areas of great strategic and economic importance can no longer be relied upon as falling within the Western sphere of interest. But there is nothing unique in this kind of setback. The challenge it poses is not fundamentally different from the sudden desertion of a major ally in the struggles of the past such as, for example, the seemingly catastrophic decision of Maria Theresa to ally the Hapsburgs with the Bourbons against Britain in the mid-18th century. This came to Britain as just as great a shock as do Mr. Nehru's cold war antics to-day. But Pitt did not waste time lamenting; nor did the scholars of the day write books, entitled "The Idea of Hapsburgism," about how to recapture Austrian friendship. Instead Britain made every effort to restore her security by forging new links with Prussia.

This surely is what all the Western countries who are now faced by the Afro-Asian revolution should be doing to-day. They should be seeking to create a new balance of power in the world which would enable them to accept the loss of empire without sacrifice of security. In theory this is by no means an impossible task. A political merger between North America and Western Europe would outweigh any economic, military, and even prestige losses which the West has suffered in Africa and Asia. Not only would it enormously facilitate in strict material terms the exploitation of our assets, but it would also demonstrate to the world that the West still has the will to survive by adapting itself to current reality. There can really be little doubt that the future lies with that part of the world which first succeeds in overcoming the anachronistic particularism of national sovereignty without falling back on the anachronistic instruments of foreign conquest. The spectacle of an independent sovereign Belgium is as absurd in the 20th century as the spectacle of a dependent Hungary is tragic. Western respect for the principle of national sovereignty is as unconstructive as Russia's contempt is destructive. With so much to gain from unity it will surely puzzle posterity why the West put off taking the plunge for so long.

How, it will be asked, would Western unification solve the challenge of Afro-Asian nationalism? The answer is very simple. There *is* no problem of Afro-Asian nationalism. The problem only arises in an acute form because the West is weak and purposeless. The West clings to its colonial possessions for two reasons: power and pride. It needs its colonies because they provide bases, resources, lines of communication and, perhaps, more important, because "the idea of colonialism" provides a sense of purpose for which as yet no real substitute has been found. But Western unification, by providing immensely fruitful new sources of power and new and inspiring political goals, would cut the West free from these preoccupations.

Of course, this sounds fanciful and visionary. But so, twenty-five years ago, did the idea of the West's voluntary withdrawal from Africa and Asia. It has taken an intellectual revolution in the West to make withdrawal practicable politics. What is needed to-day from Western intellectuals is a similar concerted effort to condition public opinion to accept a voluntary merging of national sovereignty, without which the basic material and moral strength necessary to come to terms with Africa and Asia cannot be created.

Peregrine Worsthorne

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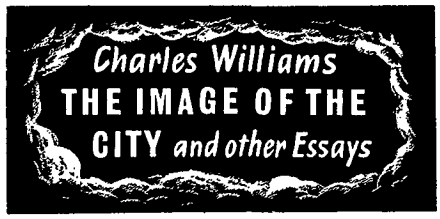

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MISS SHKLAR has put together an anthology of quotations upon a single theme: political and intellectual despair. She has bound it together by a very intelligent commentary of her own. Beginning with the romantic movement and the aftermath of the Enlightenment, she has brought the tale of lamentation almost up to the present day. The material available to her is of course immense. She might have continued right up to the last supplement (any last supplement) of *The Times Literary Supplement* or to the latest book (reviewed in *The Observer*) with some such title as "The Fall of Western Man" or "The Nemesis of Reason." Her central source is, inevitably, Nietzsche, and her sub-title, "The Decline of Political Faith." She also abstracts that which her theme requires from Hegel, and his concept of the "unhappy consciousness," rather under-emphasising the fact that he was the most radiant of optimists and the most utopian of utopians. It is true that he was the most formidable of all critics of the Enlightenment and of the claims of pure reason to find justice in human affairs. But he believed that the End, the final adjustment of man in the perfect society, was at hand and that he was there to announce it, at the right place and at the right time. Such a belief seems now almost a form of madness, part of the general madness of millennian hopes released by the French Revolution and by Napoleon. Perhaps we cannot now altogether recapture the original astonishment at these events, the apocalyptic sense that there is after all no limit to what men, or a single man, can do in re-making society. Then came the disintoxication, and there had to be an explanation that would show what went wrong. "Why the French Revolution failed" could well be the title of the mature works of Hegel and of the early works of Marx. Miss Shklar's tale of woe begins.

But it is now possible to stand back and to review the events in better proportion. Are there really good grounds for this loss of political faith, for this despair of reason in the arrangement of human affairs? After reading Miss Shklar, and many of the supplements and weekly reviews, and even some of the novelists and essayists, who constantly revel in the decline of our culture, I still cannot see that there are. It seems to me that these prophets have misunderstood the original programme of the rationalist philosophers, and therefore have been looking for the fruits of reason in the wrong place.

The rationalist philosophers of the 17th century guessed that the natural order could be made clearly intelligible to human reason: its underlying structure, being the product of reason, was accessible to reason: the colour and variety of its surface were only lent to it by our senses. The fruit of reason would be natural philosophy, and these philosophers were themselves natural philosophers—that is, scientists. Their guess has been proved correct—the natural sciences, and mathematics, which is their basis, have become unquestionably the greatest achievements of human reason, exactly as the rationalists forecast. If anyone sincerely believes reason to be the highest power of man, then he must also believe that the work of modern scientists and mathematicians is the greatest of human achievements.

But most of those who have written philosophy, or quasi-philosophy, from 1815 onwards, and who are quoted by Miss Shklar, have naturally been reluctant to accept the second of these propositions. For very few of them had any real contact with the developing sciences or with mathematics. Finding themselves, as philosophers, on the periphery of rational advance, and no longer at the centre, they frequently became spiteful and vindictive about the suc-

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cesses of rational inquiry. Hegel and Schopenhauer, the arch-pessimist, were capable of writing ignorant nonsense in their efforts to discredit physics and mathematics. Reading Miss Shklar's summary of the unhappy philosophers who came after Hegel and Marx, one has the impression of being relegated to a suburb of the intellectually second-rate. The true culture of reason, the profound and fruitful ideas of the time, are not to be found in these semi-literary, semi-philosophical sources at all. Miss Shklar's theme properly takes her into swamps and backwaters away from the mainstream, which was, and is, flowing in another direction. If the achievements of human reason had been her subject, Tocqueville and Mill would have had a place, but certainly not F. A. Schlegel, de Maistre, Berdiaeff, Unamuno, Jaspers, Heidegger, Marcel—the disappointed men, left gesticulating on the bank.

The sense that rational inquiry had finally passed from the hands of the philosophers into the hands of experimental scientists and mathematicians was the inspiration of logical positivism. The logical positivists recorded an accomplished fact, and for this reason they were intensely disliked.

But an objection has to be met: did not the philosophers of the Enlightenment claim that scientific knowledge would bring with it perpetual progress, a steady improvement of human society? It has done no such thing. The failure of this utopian hope is "the end of radicalism," which Miss Shklar discusses in an interesting chapter. Almost every one of the social reforms that Condorcet prescribed for a modern society in his *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain* have in fact been realised in this country. Now often derided as an absurd figure with his head in the clouds, he was in fact a more accurate and far-seeing prophet than any of his more hard-headed contemporaries. But the expected transformation of men, and of all their social relationships, has certainly not been achieved as a result of these reforms. The conclusion is altogether obvious: the sources of co-operation, of free communication and happiness, are not the same as the sources of rational inquiry: different powers of mind are involved. And this was obvious from the beginning, even without the discovery of the unconscious mind, since poetry, eloquence, and free communication, and everything that enters into a literary culture have always been known to have other roots. The difference between a rational method, which implies a rule, and an art and a habit of behaviour which implies a style, has always been recognised. The first can be drilled into men's minds and purposefully imposed throughout society; in industrial countries, this has been done. The second can only be indirectly acquired by imitation.

There can be societies of men trained in rational inquiry, who are at the same time hostile and divided among themselves and incapable of poetry and eloquence. The philosophical radicals overlooked this distinction. Mill in his Autobiography recalled it. This distinction gives us no reason to abuse rational inquiry, or to attribute the ills of our culture to the welfare state. Rather it implies that any new radicalism must begin with some understanding of the unconscious layers of the mind, which govern almost every social relation and which enter into all the arts of communication. There may be a long time to wait. Certainly this is a time for waiting: but not a time to listen to the ululations of disgruntled philosophers.

Stuart Hampshire

People and Power

Our Man in Havana. By GRAHAM GREENE. *Heinemann.* 15s.

Mountolive. By LAWRENCE DURRELL. *Faber.* 16s.

The Search. By C. P. SNOW. *Macmillan.* 15s.

Daddy's Gone A-Hunting. By PENELOPE MORTIMER. *Michael Joseph.* 13s. 6d.

Young Love. By JOHANNES ALLEN. *The Hogarth Press.* 12s. 6d.

IF EVER a novelist had sad lucidity of soul, Graham Greene has it. As his books get funnier, and the poetry of his incredibly economical writing becomes more elegiac, he seems more and more to resemble—perhaps one should say include—Evelyn Waugh. These two writers give such enormous pleasure—the pleasure of perfect focus—that when one is reading them they seem to divide the field of fiction between them. Readers of *Officers and Gentlemen* may recall Colonel Grace-Groundling-Marchpole of M.I.5, of whom Mr. Waugh wrote, in a superb sentence: "Given enough time, given enough confidential material, he would succeed in knitting the entire quarrelsome world into a single net of conspiracy in which there were no antagonists, merely millions of men working, unknown to one another, for the same end; and there would be no more war."

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might call the whole absurd balance of suspicion on which peace uneasily rests. He never misses a trick; with a beautiful comic despair he raises his eyebrows at our civilisation, the civilisation of the complimentary luncheon:

> "What's that odd flower you're wearing?"
> "Pan American gave it us with our dinner last night."
> "What an odd thing to do. It can hardly have improved the meal."
> "I only put it in my buttonhole so as to clear the dinner-tray. There was so little room, what with the hot cakes and champagne and the sweet salad and the tomato soup and the chicken Maryland and ice-cream. . . ."
> "What a terrible mixture."

Our Man in Havana is about a middle-aged English vacuum-cleaner salesman who is persuaded to join the secret service because he needs the extra money for his daughter. There is a very funny scene in a public lavatory where he first meets his "contact." Unfortunately, Mr. Wormold has no information and no means of acquiring any, so he makes up his reports, thereby carrying out the advice of his friend, Dr. Hasselbacher: "You should dream more, Mr. Wormold. Reality in our century is not something to be faced." But reality is madder than Mr. Wormold, and starts to catch him up.

Beneath the comedy and the excitement of the plot there is a profoundly serious moral pattern: the Forsterian belief that flags, pacts, allies, security, all add up to so much meaningless nonsense. Yet so successfully have "they" (who are rather like Edward Lear's "they") imposed this pattern on us as a necessary one that we can no longer help accepting it: "they haven't left us much to believe, have they?—even disbelief." Mr. Wormold is neither strong enough to oppose "them"—perhaps only the artist can do that—nor mad enough to beat them at their own game. Seeing only "the impossibility of explaining anything to men with power," he compromises, as one does, not for "their" abstractions, but for people he loves. Once again, Mr. Greene has taken life a little further than he found it, with results that cannot fail to delight.

According to the classifications it is Mr. Durrell, not Mr. Greene, who is the poet; yet I thought *Mountolive*, in its total impact, a strangely unpoetic book. This is partly because the diplomatic background (the scene is Egypt to-day) is done not with wild truth-telling fantasy, but with documentary accuracy. As such, of course, it is absorbing; and this new novel—the third of a tetralogy, but complete in itself—is a very distinguished piece of writing by an extremely gifted artist. All the same, I cannot help having some reservations about it as a *novel*. The tempo is unvariedly slow; the writing almost too beautiful; so that, although each sentence is a pleasure to read, the whole thing is rather an effort; I was tempted to skip but did not, because I kept thinking of all the trouble Mr. Durrell had taken.

The characters are well described, particularly the minor ones; but from the outside. Mountolive himself, the British Ambassador, is of course meant to be a helpless puppet ("the illusion that you are free to act"), but even the Egyptian characters, though superbly manipulated into a fine piece of narrative, did not, for me, really come alive. Mr. Durrell has many incidents, but he is too honest, he has not the novelist's way of simplifying—even falsifying—incidents so that they turn into *situations*. For me, the most fascinating parts of the book were those dealing with the aspirations of the Christian Coptic minority and their vision of an anti-Moslem Egypt under the ægis, not of Britain and France, but of Israel. I kept wanting to read these as straight history and politics and found it off-putting that they were embedded in fiction. For all its sensibility, knowledge, and insight into human affairs in general, *Mountolive* seemed to me more a thesis than a novel; as if Mr. Durrell had started not with individual people but with ideas. All the same, these comments—which may very well not correspond to other readers' experience—would not be worth

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making at length if Mr. Durrell were not a writer of immense and rewarding gifts, who makes most of his contemporaries seem shallow, sloppy, and trivial.

The Search is a re-issue of C. P. Snow's first novel, originally published in 1934 but long out of print. It is by any standards a fine novel; for a first novel it is remarkable. Arthur Miles the scientist may not be quite a first sketch for Lewis Eliot the lawyer, but the resemblances are strong. The scientific background is absorbing, and absorbed completely into the story. You must go back to Wells to find another writer who has done so much from this starting-point. In *The Search*, Snow has already created his own unique world. There are a few touches of humour, the book is less solemn and perhaps more honest than the later series; but the things for which one goes to this writer can be found here, done as well as he was ever to do them: the feeling of starting out alone into the world of knowledge, success, and power, "the mixture of sadness and eagerness and exultation" which is felt so powerfully at that most ambiguous of seasons, October, when the academic year begins and the natural year is dying.

No other writer of our time, I think, has so well made the point that an able man wants to be "used to the full": an important point at a time when so many intellectuals are grossly and frustratingly under-employed. It is this—the clash between the rebel and the time-server, the man who is more brilliant than his fellows yet must bow to their mediocrity in order to secure his place—that I find so fascinating about Snow. It also explains the self-made hero's obsession with knowledge as a means of power and success, the constant, niggling, measuring-up of one's contemporaries, the determination to palm himself off on them as a sound, solid chap while reserving the right to see through them which belongs properly to the artist. We all want to have our cake and eat it; we are not all so honest about it. And having your cake and eating it might be the motto of Snow's work.

The Search ends with a dramatic peripeteia, in which the hero abandons science after it has offered him a set-back and shown him that his devotion to it was a sham. "And so, after the years of struggle, the personal things had won." The rebel has defeated the time-server. I cannot help wondering—in the light of *Homecomings*—whether *The Search* will turn out to be a blueprint for the whole Lewis Eliot saga.

Daddy's Gone A-Hunting takes us into the domestic world. Mrs. Mortimer writes about unhappy families, those with husbands rich enough to commute sixty miles—not daily, of course, but weekly, which means that from Monday to Friday time hangs pretty heavy on feminine hands. The daughter of this particular family becomes pregnant. Her mother—who had to marry her father for the same reason—is determined that Angela shall not make the same mistake, even though the alternative is abortion, a theme rarely treated so centrally by a woman novelist. Mrs. Mortimer writes most readably and conveys with hollow accuracy the wretchedness and emptiness of those who have money but who lack the taste, the intelligence, or the spiritual capacity to enjoy life: the great untrained, over-washed, coffee-drinking middle classes marooned beside the garage, the telephone, and the bridge table: victims of *ennui*. I sometimes feel that with her short, sharp sentences and her highly charged yet casual style, Mrs. Mortimer—who judges almost too perfectly the amount of work the modern novel-reader is prepared to do—has so far given slightly less than the full measure of which she is capable. Her power of getting inside characters like Mrs. Whiting suggests that she could go further and deeper in exploration and give us that full-scale, up-to-date study we so badly need: Madame Bovary in the money belt beyond the green belt.

With such a bumper harvest from the established, novels by new writers tend, in monthly reports, to get crowded out; but I should like to record the pleasure I received from *Young Love*, a novel translated, very beautifully, from the Danish of Johannes Allen by Naomi Walford. In contrast to our familiar English world of drizzle and depression, the world of *Young Love* is a happy, sunny, sensual world, in which the young enjoy sex without disaster while their parents are terribly sensible and Scandinavian about divorce ("Your mother and I have decided to get a divorce. It's not a thing that's going to distress either party very deeply").

This is a story told through the eyes of a young girl. The descriptions of love-making and dangerous games with mechanical vehicles may suggest the world of Sagan, but I enjoyed this book more than any I have read by Sagan. It is warmer, more natural, more spontaneous, less calculated, less sophisticated. The author—who ought by everything but name to be a woman—responds to experience direct; no fashionable gimmicks are added; there is no slickness, and the moments of despair are the natural ones of youth, not the contrived ones of literature. The book conveys a steady sense of life and joy which is rare nowadays.

K. W. Gransden

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LETTERS

The Bitter Truth

I ENJOYED reading M. J. Lasky's thoughts on his recent visit to India in the September issue of ENCOUNTER. But there is one remark of his which calls for comment. He refers to the reluctance of certain newspapers in India to publish articles by Mr. A. D. Gorwala, a former civil servant with a distinguished record and one of our best commentators to-day on public affairs. Lasky attributes the allergy towards Mr. Gorwala's writings to the "bitterness" with which he writes. This, I think, is a misunderstanding. Mr. Gorwala does hold definite views and expresses them in a downright manner, which is unfortunately only too rare, but he writes with urbanity and a sense of humour. What has led to Mr. Gorwala's still small voice being repeatedly silenced, whether he writes as "Vivek," "Vidura," or himself, is the courage with which he criticises various aspects of governmental policy, administrative and foreign. That he is published so rarely gives cause for concern about the health and freedom of the Indian press.

MINOO MASANI

Bombay

"Conversations in Moscow"

I SHOULD like to correct an error which slipped into my portrait of Ilya Ehrenberg [*Conversations in Moscow*] which you published in your October number. My reference to his book, *Julio Jurenito*, which I saw on his book-shelves should not have said that "this early book of his has never appeared in the Soviet Union"; it should have said that this remarkably heretical novel (written not only in the pre-Thaw stage but even before the onset of the ice) was "never again printed in Russia." As your readers may know, a new English edition was recently brought out in London by MacGibbon & Kee.

GERD RUGE

Moscow

"Lolita"

IT IS good to see serious critical attention at last being paid in this country to Vladimir Nabokov, but it is unfortunate that the attention should all be directed to one of his less successful books. The average reader might well imagine he had written only one book.

Lolita has nothing of that which makes Nabokov's other books so memorable. It has not the beauty of style of his early novels in Russian, it has not the cold detachment and crispness of his "European" novels in English, nor has it the uproarious humour and, in Gogol's phrase, the "laughter through tears" of *Pnin* and of Nabokov's study of Gogol himself—surely one of the most exhilarating literary portraits ever written?

Mr. Trilling says "that in the sense in which the courts use the word, it is not possible to call *Lolita* a pornographic book." Yet it was the subject of two successful prosecutions at Bow Street in 1956, and was given special mention by the Commissioner of Police, Sir John Nott-Bower, in his recent report to the Select Committee on Obscene Publications.

In his own pseudonymous introduction to *Lolita*, the author supposes that we are "entranced with the book while abhorring its author." With those who know Nabokov's work, I suspect the reverse. They will abhor this book while remaining entranced with the real Nabokov.

G. L. PLAYFAIR

London

Ehrenburg—and Bukharin

SURELY Ilya Ehrenburg knew—what your Mr. Gerd Ruge incorrectly recorded—that his *Jurenito* novel was in fact published in the Soviet Union. But Ehrenburg is a master of dissemblance. Just as he praised the Boris Pasternak novel but qualified it by saying that he hadn't read "the last sections" (where the most heretical things appear), so must he have maintained a tactically discreet silence about his own heretical *Jugendroman*. After all, when it was published in Moscow, there was a preface written for it by a man who was murdered in the purge twenty years ago and who is still in official disgrace—Nikolai Bukharin....

DAVID BURG

Munich

The Pope

I READ Mr. Robert Neville's touching tribute to the late Pacelli in your November issue with great interest. It is a masterly piece of authoritative analysis. My only complaint is that he is rather overly concerned with the late Pontiff's better-known attributes of cynicism, nepotism, and garrulity. Otherwise, I have nothing but praise, especially for the sensitive good taste, not to mention common vulgarity, which characterised the article. It is typical of Mr. Neville's authoritative insight that he can assert that Pius XII was preparing himself for Sainthood.... And then Mr. Neville was also able to forecast what Pius XI would have done had he survived the War.... A hasty glance at his autobiography shows at once the depth of his authority for the statements in his article. I would like to have read some of his features on Bridge.

Nor can the Editors of ENCOUNTER escape their meed of praise for publishing this journalistic gem by the shy statement that the views of the writer should not be attributed to them. The happy coincidence of their receipt of the article with the death of the Pope may have been in the first instance merely fortuitous. The decision to print it, even

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granting the early press date of ENCOUNTER, was not.

May I join with the other two or three of the world's 480 million Catholics who are probably among your readers in thanking you for this gracious tribute to our late leader.

It is in a voice choked with gratitude that I tell my newsagent to cancel my subscription to ENCOUNTER.

Dublin PATRICK FAHY

[*We assumed most* ENCOUNTER *subscribers would understand that Mr. Neville's article, written wholly in the present tense when referring to Pope Pius XII, was accepted, and printed, for what is identified as our November issue, many weeks before the Pope's illness and death. Needless to say, we sincerely regret any offence which this unfortunate coincidence may inadvertently have caused some of our readers.*—ED.]

Riot and Murder

I KNOW that Mr. Melvin Lasky's "Indian Notebook" was written in a lighter vein. But even then I can't refrain from adding the following information, particularly on the Language Problem. He writes, "In Bombay the supporters of the Gujerati language (especially well-to-do merchants) and the Maharashtrans (whose lower-class elements have been agitated by the Communists) have rioted—and murdered—in the city streets." Of course, there were riots in Bombay city in the third week of January '56 when the Maharashtrans were angered by the injustice done by the Government of India; the decision was made to keep the city under central administration, thus denying the citizens their democratic rights and preventing them from playing their part in the political life of Maharashtra state. As the Congress leaders did not give proper guidance, the people gave vent to their anger in whatever manner they thought fit and tried to stop the machinery of the State Government. But there were no murders of Gujeratis, nor was there any destruction of private property. As for the charge of molestation of Gujerati women, investigation proved the charge to be baseless. The then Premier of Bombay, Mr. Morarji Desai, who is being built up by the Press as a true Gandhian and future Prime Minister of India, issued orders to the Police and the Home-guards. Some 82 persons, including a 9-year-old boy, were killed, and even babies, sleeping in cradles, were suffocated, due to tear gas.

BHELEHENDEE REJÈ

Valyem, India

INDEX TO VOLUME XI

The Index to Volume XI (July–December 1958) will be ready in December and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 25 Haymarket, London, S.W.1. Standing orders for future indices can be accepted.

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

Pasternak

WHEN not long before the outbreak of World War II Carl von Ossietzky received the Nobel prize, it was impossible for him to attend the ceremony in Stockholm. He was then in a Nazi prison (he eventually died there). The Soviet press was at the time very indignant. But the Nazis had never extolled "peace" and they could, with some consistency, dismiss the Prize for Peace awarded to Ossietzky. "Literature" is indeed extolled as one of the great social values in the Soviet Union: the Nobel prize for literature carries with it great prestige even in Russia; and the fact that no Soviet writer has ever received it has been a source of wounded pride. The only Russian recipient was Ivan Bunin, an emigré writer (some of whose works were "rehabilitated" in the Soviet Union when he died). The award of the Nobel prize to Boris Pasternak has, therefore, created an acutely embarrassing dilemma and has finally forced the Soviet authorities to face the issue. Until then the Soviet press had maintained a stony silence about *Doctor Zhivago*, despite the fact that it became a best-seller in many countries. The only reference to the book was the original note in *Znamya*, when it printed (in 1954) some of the *Zhivago* poems. In the meantime the uneasiness of the Soviet guardians of literature was manifested by the (unsuccessful) mission of Surkov to Milan to prevent the publication of the book; Surkov's interviews pointedly recalling the fate of Pilnyak (who also had a novel published abroad); and, quite recently, by the reply given to a journalist at the Frankfurt Book Fair by a director of the Soviet Publishing House, *"Mezhdunarodnaia Kniga,"* who implied that *Doctor Zhivago* would appear in the Soviet Union in January 1959.

The reaction to the award was, however, instantaneous. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* described it as "a hostile political act directed against the Soviet state." *Doctor Zhivago* was called "an artistically squalid, malicious work replete with hatred of socialism." Pasternak had "chosen the path of dishonesty and shame" and "an ignominious end awaits both *Doctor Zhivago*, that resurrected Judas, and the author, whose fate will be that of popular contempt."

At first, Pasternak refused to submit to pressure. *Pravda* declared that if Pasternak had had a spark of "Soviet dignity . . . he would have rejected this award, so humiliating to him as a writer." Evidently Pasternak did not feel humiliated. In his cable to the Swedish Academy he said he was "immensely grateful, touched, proud, astonished, abashed."

The award to Ossietzky was attributed by the Nazi press to the pluto-democratic machinations of the international Jewry. Now, *Pravda* claimed that "the obliging grovellers of the big bourgeoisie have crowned Pasternak with the Nobel prize." Any honest Soviet writer would have contemptuously rejected the compliments "paid by the enemies of our country." *Doctor Zhivago* is a "nasty lampoon against the Socialist revolution and the Soviet people, extolling everything that was counter-revolutionary."

Finally (on October 27th), Pasternak was expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers and deprived of the title of "Soviet writer." The decision was "unanimous" in view "of his political and moral downfall and his betrayal of the Soviet people and of the cause of socialism, peace, and progress."

The dilemma of the British Communists was less acute. The *Daily Worker* condemned *Doctor Zhivago* in a vitriolic review by Pat Sloan, the Secretary of the British-Soviet Friendship Society. It said that the Russia described by Pasternak was the one "the emigré princesses and countesses wrote about after their escape from the Bolsheviks." But a few days later the Communist weekly *World News*, in a review by Ivor Montagu, while condemning Pasternak as an "unmitigated snob," regretted that the book had not been published in Russia, and even stated that "that society is stronger which can afford to allow ideas to be settled by discussion not suppression."

As a matter of fact, copies of an unexpurgated Russian edition of *Doctor Zhivago* (published in Holland) have already found their way to the U.S.S.R. Their reported price on the black market is 200–300 roubles (£5–£8).

In a recent interview with a Swedish journalist in Moscow, Boris Pasternak said:

> *Excuse me if I have offended you. Are you possibly a Communist? . . . Actually, the demands of the hierarchy are very slight. You should hate what you like and love what you abhor! . . . But this is the most difficult of all. . . .*

The Last Prisoner

A NEW comedy, *Police, or a Drama from the Circles of Gendarmerie*, by Slawomir Mrozek, has been presented by the Warsaw Dramatic Theatre, and its text has been published by the Warsaw monthly, *Dialog* (No. 6, 1958). A satire on a police state, and a *reductio ad absurdum* of the idea of "the withering away of the state" in a dictatorship, the author makes his meaning absolutely clear by stating categorically in the introduction that "the play does not contain anything apart from what it contains, that is, it is not an allusion to anything. . . ."

The story takes place in a nondescript country ruled by a regent. The last political prisoner, after ten years of fruitless interrogation, suddenly comes to the conclusion that "we have the best régime in the world!" This upsets the prison governor who realises that the release of the last prisoner eliminates his own *raison d'être*. He is deeply embarrassed by the sudden, unexpected success in converting the last political oppositionist. He tries, in vain, to persuade him to show some traces of

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political disloyalty. The prisoner is released. The governor remains now in the empty prison with only one companion, an old police sergeant, a professional *agent provocateur*, who performs his duties with zest and pleasure. He, too, is unhappy because "an alarming unanimity has been achieved in the country." The poor sergeant, on the instigation of the governor, tries hopelessly to provoke citizens to shout anti-state slogans. He accepts the governor's proposal to become a mock-prisoner himself. The situation must be saved; the police must not become superfluous. On the appeal to his sense of duty he shouts anti-state slogans, and is duly arrested by the governor.

However, the plan misfires. The imprisoned sergeant undergoes an unexpected ideological evolution in his cell, and he is beginning to change his old loyal attitudes. His conversations with the prison governor begin to resemble the discussions with the prisoner recently released. This prisoner had originally been arrested for a bomb attempt on a general. Now this general comes to inspect the prison; the ex-prisoner is his A.D.C. The general is not dismayed; as he puts it, "everybody must sometimes throw a bomb on some general . . . there are still so many others who have not yet fulfilled this natural need."

The sergeant is persuaded to stage a mock-attempt on the general's life for *raisons d'état* (or *raisons de prison*). The play ends with a farcical scene. The prison governor, the general, and his aide-de-camp, arrest each other. The *ex-agent provocateur* has been converted into a rebel and shouts, most seriously, "Long live freedom!"

Neither the wit nor the politics seem to have been lost on the Polish audiences. Nor were the critics slow to point out the moral. One of them wrote (*Przeglad Kulturalny*, August 28th, 1958): "That is the way the world goes. Good (the activity of the police) generates evil (the spirit of rebellion), and the heroes of Mrozek's play end by arresting each other. The ferment is on again. The audience, as I was able to note, reacts quickly to the clever action of the play and to the ideas woven into it. . . . The expressions used are in the contemporary police jargon. Everybody is automatically compelled to interpret the play in the light of situations of the present day. . . ."

Appeal

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Anti-Dudintsev

ON April 24th, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published an article—by V. Kochetov—complaining that in 1957 three, and in 1958 four, out of eight Leninist Prizes were simply not awarded. The article caused quite a stir; it hinted at the "incorrect" attitude of the Presidium of the Committee on the Leninist Prizes, and implied that its decisions might have been dictated by politically suspect motives. A press discussion followed and the Presidium published an explanation denying the implications of the Kochetov article. It defended its decision to distribute the prizes with "restraint" instead of granting it on a lavish scale as happened with Stalin prizes "as a result of which prizes were awarded not only to outstanding works but also to insignificant ones and even to simply weak works" (*Sovietskaia Kultura*, May 15th, 1958).

It looks now as if Kochetov is receiving satisfaction. His new novel, *The Brothers Yershov*, has been applauded by the Soviet critics. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published a review of it by J. Zhdanov in which he said:

> *The Brothers Yershov* is a reply of a Bolshevik artist to some writers . . . who wavered in the complex conditions of the struggle against the bourgeois ideology, who became victims and propagators of gloomy "thaw" moods and revisionist hesitations, and who began to sink into the mud of bourgeois pseudo-democracy and to make concessions to philistine bourgeois tastes. The deviation from socialist ideology found its concentrated expression in the ill-famed novel by Dudintsev. Therefore, the polemics which are carried out by V. Kochetov over that sadly-remembered novel are fully justified.

The negative hero of *Not by Bread Alone*, the bureaucrat Drozdov, thus has his revenge. Kochetov attacks not only "the revisionist moods," the lack of *partiinost* and *ideinost* in literature and art, but refers explicitly to *The Thaw* by Ehrenburg, deploring its pernicious influence in intellectual circles. The book, "the answer to Dudintsev," is being given wide publicity in the Soviet press. *Pravda* (September 25th, 1958) pointed out, in a long review, that "the basic ideological orientation of *The Brothers Yershov* makes it useful in the ideological struggle against all sorts of influences of the reactionary ideology of the capitalist West."

The book has now been made into a play and it will be staged by the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow. The première is listed for January 1959, during the 21st Congress of the C.P.S.U.

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AUTHORS

Dan Jacobson (who contributed a letter from California to our June number) writes about himself:

"I was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1929, and grew up in Kimberley. I went back to Johannesburg to take a degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, and since then have lived in Israel, England, and the United States—my visit to the States being on a Fellowship awarded to me by Stanford University, California. I have now settled in a very quiet London suburb, and have no intention of moving from it for many years. I have published three novels, the last being *The Price of Diamonds*; and a collection of stories, *A Long Way from London*, was brought out by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in September."

*

Before he became "a chronicler of the more disreputable aspects of our age" (as he described himself in his autobiography), ARTHUR KOESTLER was a student of science in Vienna. Since he gave up writing on political subjects in 1954, he has reverted to his earlier passion and spent the following years in writing *The Sleepwalkers—A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe*, from which the article in this issue is excerpted. It will be published early next year by Hutchinsons of London and Macmillan of New York. One of the avowed purposes of the book is to contribute towards "the ending of the cold war between the humanities and the sciences." It has an Introduction by Professor Herbert Butterfield, Master of Peterhouse, who had a similar aim in view when he wrote his *Origins of Modern Science*.

*

RAYMOND ARON, who divides his time between the Sorbonne, where he is professor of sociology, and *Le Figaro*, where his political comments appear regularly, has just had a translation of his little book *On War* published in England by Secker & Warburg.... RICHARD H. ROVERE is the Washington correspondent of *The New Yorker* magazine, and he is the author of recent books on General MacArthur and President Eisenhower.... ANTHONY RHODES has just completed a biography of D'Annunzio which Weidenfeld and Nicolson are publishing shortly under the title of *The Poet as Superman*.... MARTIN ESSLIN'S book on Bertolt Brecht, a critical study which deals at length with his political attitudes, will be published next year by Eyre & Spottiswoode.

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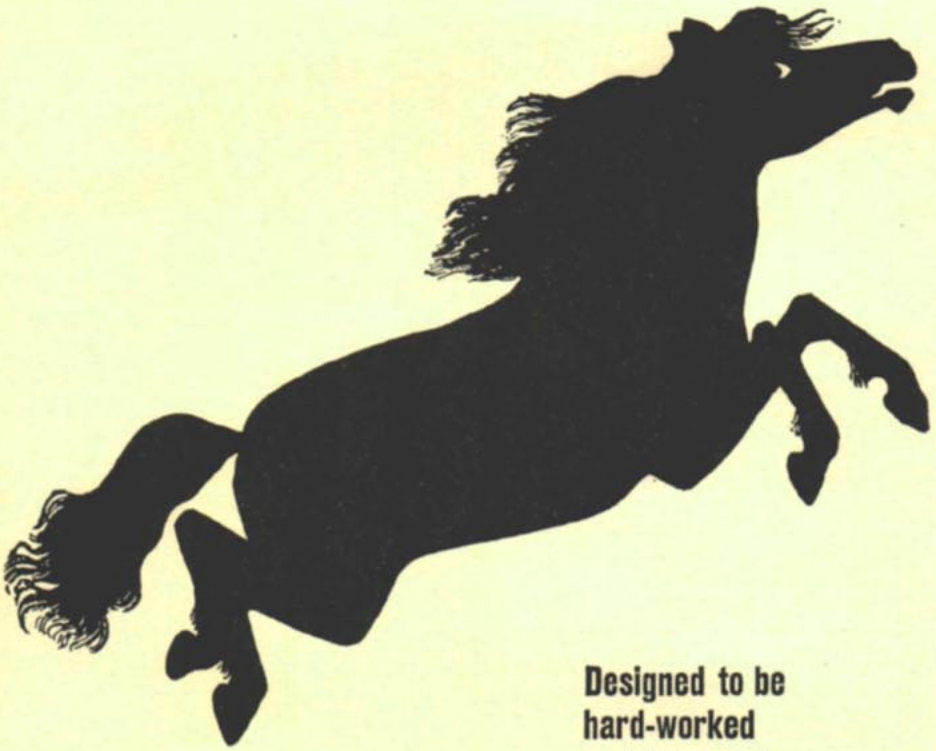

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